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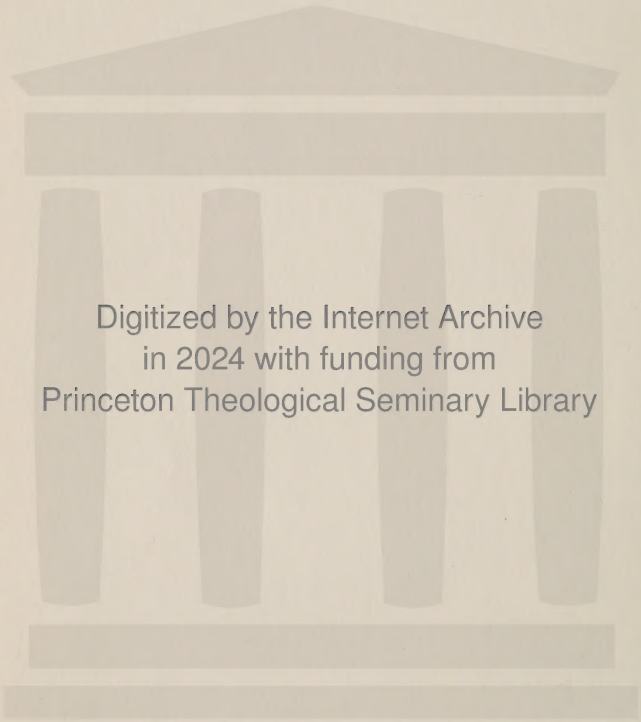
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CALVIN'S CALVINISM.

PART SECOND.

A DEFENCE

OF THE

SECRET PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

ETC., ETC.

"ACCORDING TO THE PURPOSE OF HIM WHO WORKETH ALL THINGS AFTER THE COUNSEL OF HIS OWN WILL."—(EPHES. I. 11.)

"O THE DEPTH OF THE RICHES BOTH OF THE WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE OF GOD! HOW UNSEARCHABLE ARE HIS JUDGMENTS, AND HIS WAYS PAST FINDING OUT."—(ROM. XI. 33.)

It is felt to be a necessary tribute of "praise" to God, (Ps. l. 23) and of 'due honour' (Rom. xiii. 7) to those who have thus willingly and nobly helped to bring these Two Treatises to the press, when no other means of their publication could be found, — that the original Circular Letter of Appeal, and the names of the ready and liberal Respondents to it, should be published, with the "First Part" (or First Volume).—They are as follow,

Brethren and Friends,

During my great bodily and mental affliction, it has pleased God to give me strength to *translate* two Works of the beloved and immortal Calvin; the Titles of which are subjoined to the present Appeal.

The limits of my own means will not permit me to get the Works printed and published, on my own responsibility; and no bookseller can be found, in England or in Scotland, to purchase the copy-rights for publication.

In this difficulty, after several months of vain effort, I have made up my mind to ask the lovers and friends of Divine Truth, to aid me, by their subscriptions, with the means requisite for sending the Works in question to the Press, with a view to their publication, forthwith;— that the Church of Christ may be edified, the nation witnessed to, and God glorified, by these two testimonies of the great and blessed Reformer.

The accompanying Preface, printed in the type and form, in which the proposed Volume is intended to appear, and presented for your acceptance, will show the nature of the Works, and their great interest and value.

It is proposed to print and publish the first treatise, or "First Part," in the first instance; and then the "Second Part" immediately afterwards; if the Divine blessing shall rest on the first effort. Both Treatises are quite ready for the Press.

The sum required for printing, and binding in appropriate cloth,

500 copies of the FIRST PART,—"ON THE ETERNAL PREDESTINATION OF GOD," will be about 60*l.* Its price will be 5*s.* A copy will be sent to every subscriber of 10*s.* or upwards.*

Should the Church and the public demand the SECOND PART,—"ON THE SECRET PROVIDENCE OF GOD," the Press expenses, &c., of that volume will be 50*l.*, and the price 4*s.*

Trusting that the Most High will honour and succeed this Appeal to you, for the promotion of your eternal good, and for His own cause and glory,

I am, Brethren and Friends,

Your willing and glad Servant in the Truth,

HENRY COLE.

3, *Upper Islington Terrace, London,*
April 15, 1856.

* Subscribers are kindly and particularly requested to send their *full* and *correct addresses*, with their Subscriptions, as a List will be published with the volume.

CALVIN'S CALVINISM.

(FIRST PART.)

A TREATISE on the ETERNAL PREDESTINATION of GOD: to which is added, a BRIEF REPLY to a certain calumniator of the Doctrine of Eternal Predestination. By JOHN CALVIN. Originally published at Geneva, A.D. 1552; and now first translated into English, by HENRY COLE, D.D., of Clare Hall, Cambridge, Sunday Evening Lecturer of St. Mary Somerset, Upper Thames-street, London; and the Translator of "Select Works" of Martin Luther, in various volumes.

CALVIN'S CALVINISM.

(SECOND PART.)

A DEFENCE of the SECRET PROVIDENCE of GOD, by which He works out his eternal decrees; being a REPLY to the calumnies of a certain worthless person, directed against the Secret Providence of God. By JOHN CALVIN. Originally published at Geneva, A.D. 1558; and now first translated into English, by HENRY COLE, D.D., of Clare Hall, Cambridge, Sunday Evening Lecturer of St. Mary Somerset, Upper Thames-street, London; and Translator of "Select Works" of Martin Luther, in various volumes.

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Thus, my dear Brethren and Friends, have you, in your hands, by your own willing and liberal *means*, the first volume of CALVIN'S CALVINISM, "On the Eternal Election of God."—May it be abundantly blessed to your spiritual pleasure and profit, and to God's glory.—The subscriptions amount, as nearly as possible, to the originally expected costs of *printing and publishing*, 60*l.*; the total is 58*l.* 13*s.* 3*d.*—The deficiency immediately made up by my counselling Friends.

I am, dear Brethren and Friends,

Your faithful and grateful Servant in the Truth,

HENRY COLE.

LETTER II.

Brethren and Friends,—The Church and the public have now in their hands, the First Volume of "Calvin's Calvinism" "On the Eternal Predestination of God;" through the willing and liberal *means* furnished by the Subscribers to that Volume.

The second volume, "On the Secret Providence of God," is quite ready for the press; and will be sent to the printer, as originally intimated, as soon as the subscriptions for that volume also, shall admit of that step. The expences of the "Second Part," it is found, by experience, will be the same as of the "First," 60*l.*; consequently, its price must be the same, 5*s.*

The accompanying Preface, printed in the type and form in which the Second Volume is intended to appear, that it may harmonize with the First, is presented for your acceptance; an attention adopted, in the case of the First Volume also, for information and satisfaction.

I am, Brethren and Friends,

Your faithful and grateful Servant in the Truth,

HENRY COLE.

3, *Upper Islington Terrace, London,*
June 21, 1856.

LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS TO SECOND VOLUME,

INCLUDING ALSO THE NAMES OF THOSE WHOSE SUBSCRIPTIONS WERE RECEIVED TOO LATE TO BE INSERTED IN THE LIST PREFIXED TO THE FIRST VOLUME.

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The Subscriptions amount to 60*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.*—Some further unexpected expenses immediately made up, as in the case of Vol. I., by the same counselling Friends;—to whom allusion is made, at the close of Preface to this Vol. II.

CALVIN'S CALVINISM.

SECOND PART.

A DEFENCE

OF

THE SECRET PROVIDENCE OF GOD:

BY WHICH HE EXECUTES HIS ETERNAL DECREES:

BEING

A REPLY

TO THE 'SLANDEROUS REPORTS' (Rom. iii. 8)

OF

A CERTAIN WORTHLESS CALUMNIATOR

DIRECTED AGAINST

THE SECRET PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

BY JOHN CALVIN.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED AT GENEVA A.D. 1558; AND NOW FIRST TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

BY HENRY COLE, D.D.,
OF CLARE HALL, CAMBRIDGE;
SUNDAY EVENING LECTURER OF ST. MARY SOMERSET, UPPER THAMES-STREET, LONDON; AND TRANSLATOR OF "SELECT WORKS" OF MARTIN LUTHER, IN VARIOUS VOLUMES.

LONDON:
WERTHEIM AND MACINTOSH, 24, PATERNOSTER-ROW.
1857.

ALEXANDER MACINTOSH,
PRINTER,
GREAT NEW-STREET, LONDON.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

TO

SECOND VOLUME.

It is an awful and deplorable fact, that the adorable Redeemer and only Saviour of men is, according to the prophetic declaration of the Scripture concerning Him, "A stone of stumbling and rock of offence" (Isa. viii. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 8), wherever He comes, in his Spirit, life, and power. Equally lamentable are the sure *consequences*, which follow the written, or preached, proclamation of the essential doctrines of his everlasting Gospel. Nor have any of those doctrines met with a greater degree of enmity, hatred, and violent opposition from men, than the two all-high and glorious truths of his revealed Word, which are now immediately before us;—"The eternal predestination of God," and 'the wonderful counsel and excellent working' (Isa. xxviii. 29) of "The secret providence of God," by which He works out, in his sovereign *way*, the decrees of his sovereign *will*.

The former of these momentous doctrines forms the *subject*, and *object*, of the preceding Treatise: for a view of the nature of which, and of Calvin's success in its unequalled execution, the reader is referred to the Preface, by which it is introduced to the English Church of Christ: which Preface is repeated in this

Second Volume, with the intent of giving a clearer and more full view of the *immediate connexion* between the TWO TREATISES; and of aiding their combined exposition of "*Calvin's* CALVINISM;" (or, what Calvin's principles, doctrines, and ministry, *really were;*) which is the design, as originally stated, of the present translations, and of their publication; a design which, it is sincerely hoped, they will not fail to accomplish. The PREFACE to the First Volume is repeated in the Second, for the purpose also of meeting the case of those who may now, or hereafter, possess the latter Volume, and not the former.

The present Treatise of the same beloved Reformer of undying memory, and of imperishable 'high esteem, in love, for his works' sake' (1 Thess. v. 13) is devoted to a discussion of that equally sublime and equally incomprehensible subject "THE SECRET PROVIDENCE OF GOD." This unfathomable and incomprehensible deep, Calvin enters, with the same acute and powerful intellect which characterizes the preceding Treatise; and with a holiness and reverence of spirit correspondently profound. He states, in all its fulness, the mysterious and inscrutable depth of the mind of God, in the awe-filling dispensations of his "secret providence:" and presents a noble, admirable, and unanswerable DEFENCE of their sure justice, Divine holiness, and infinite wisdom.

Neither of these glorious doctrines of the Bible has been declared, in any age or place, by the tongue, or by the pen, of the servants of God, without exciting (as we have already stated) the hostile enmity, and more or less violent opposition, of men. It is no marvel therefore that Calvin, who was called to so prominent a ministration of them, should have met with a parallel amount of hatred, malignity, and violence, in *his* day and generation: nor that he should therefore have been necessitated to employ as much time and toil, in their public *defence*, as in their public ministration.

Luther and Calvin, therefore, each bore his large and

inevitable share of the "offence of the cross." (Gal. v. 11.) But while Luther's heavy share exceeded, perhaps, that of Calvin, in the number, rage, hostility, and mightiness of his adversaries; the enemies of Calvin surpassed those of Luther, in hatred, malignity, misrepresentation, contumely, slander, and violence. And these peculiarities of hostile and determined opposition were in exact accordance with the natures of the ministerial works of these two blessed and prominent servants of the Most High.

Luther's mighty work lay in the exposure and demolition of the principles and authorities of Churches, and of kingdoms; and in the defiance of the power of popes, kings, princes, and potentates of the earth. But the work of Calvin lay more directly with the hearts, principles, and spirits of men,—filled with hatred against those very truths, which he was expressly called of God to declare, almost anew, with all the light and penetrating power of his ministry, to a truth-hating world.

Both these pre-eminent servants of God, however, 'hidden in the hollow of his hand' (Is. xlix. 2), defended from without by his Omnipotent power, and sustained, within, by the consolations of his Spirit, 'finished the work which He gave them to do;' and are now wearing, in eternal glory, the crowns 'which the Lord, the righteous Judge, had laid up for them,' from all eternity, as their sure reward. (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.)

Those enemies of the loved and noble Swiss Reformer, who resisted his testimony concerning "The secret providence of God," were, if possible, more numerous, more hostile, more acrimonious and violent, and certainly more false, misrepresentative, scandalizing, and malignant, than those who resisted his witness concerning "The eternal predestination of God." Though these *twin cardinal truths* of the Bible ever stand, in all *direct consequence*, necessarily and inseparably *connected*. This excess of virulent hostility to the former glorious doctrine, is

strikingly manifest, from the present attack of "a certain worthless Calumniator:" whose malicious and mendacious violence called forth that DEFENCE, which forms the burden of the present Treatise.

The *method* of defensive Reply adopted by Calvin, is characteristically plain, honest, and satisfactory. He gives the ARTICLES of accusation (or SLANDERS), in the order in which they were published by the Calumniator: and he makes his replies to them consecutively, in defence of the sovereignty and secrecy of "The Providence of God." But the reader is informed, by way of premonition, that the parentheses,—"(that is, SLANDER I., II., III., &c.)," which are found in all the HEADINGS to the Sections, are Calvin's parenthetical *comments*, as it were, on the Calumniator's terms, "ARTICLE I., II., III., &c.:" by which *parenthesis*, in each case, Calvin testifies, that each ARTICLE is the basest CALUMNY!

Who this prominent Calumniator was, is now unknown. It was very probably Servetus: to whose insidious designs, and persecuting animosity, Calvin himself makes so much allusion, in the preceding Treatise. One thing is certain; and it is worthy our recollection;—that this Calumniator of Calvin, and of his doctrine and ministry, was a deadly enemy to the Truth; and that he was as industrious in his researches for hostile materials, as subtle in his reasonings, and as indefatigable in his inventions of opposing arguments, as he was malicious and violent in his opposition. So that it may with much safety be concluded, that the following sheets contain the most of, if not all, the strongest, (or rather vilest,) arguments, which the utmost efforts of the rationalist, the sceptic, and the infidel, can bring against those *two essential doctrines* of the revealed Word, which the Two present Treatises so admirably *state* and *defend*. For "there is no discharge in this war" of THE TRUTH. (Eccles. viii. 8.) Wherever it is written or preached,—conflicts, persecutions, and sufferings for its sake, by writers and by preachers, must,

with solemn certainty, be endured. (2 Tim. iii. 11; 2 Pet. ii. 2.)

No!—The "offence of the CROSS" of the Redeemer, and of his TRUTH, has *not "ceased"* (Gal. v. 11): nor will it cease, till time shall be no more. The same false accusations, slanders, misrepresentations, and perversions of the doctrines, principles, and actions of the true servants of Christ (especially with reference to the *two great doctrines* of the everlasting Gospel, now immediately under discussion), which have existed in all ages, in various forms of violence and malignity, still prevail, on every side.

Wherefore (to make a few condensed and concluding observations upon the completion and issue of this Second Volume),—the excellency and usefulness of these Treatises of the beloved, able and immortal Calvin, will be found, it is hoped, as originally designed by the translator, to be *threefold.*

First, the clear and truthful statement of the sublime doctrines of God's sovereign grace, sustained by the Scriptures and by the experience of the just, throughout the Treatises, will be edifying and establishing, it is trusted, to all those members of the Church of Christ, who can trace, with any degree of comfort, by the light and testimony of the Spirit and of the Word, their "calling" of God. While the divine and powerful *arguments,* by which the Scriptural statements are illustrated and confirmed, will strengthen the assurance of their salvation; by showing them, that its security rests on the *very nature* and *attributes* of God, as its "sure foundation."—The blessed and beloved "poor" of God's family, indeed, who form the greater portion of his heavenly household, may not feel themselves competent to follow the acute and deep Calvin, throughout the extent of his *arguments.* Yet some, even of them, may be able, in a profitable measure, to do so, with admiration and thankfulness, to the strengthening of their faith and hope. For a "poor

wise man" (Eccles. ix. 15), in whom dwells the spirit of wisdom and of truth, has more mental power and judgment, in such things, than the world, and even the saints themselves, generally give him credit for.—And though we are instructed to look around us, and to mark who they are that compose the generality of the disciples of Christ; "For ye see your calling, brethren; how that *not many* wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" (1 Cor. i. 26); yet we have great cause to glorify God (as a certain "noble" disciple once observed) that the Word does not say *not any* noble, or wise, or learned, or educated, or intelligent, are called. Into the hands of some of these, therefore, who may be able to follow, understand, and appreciate the Divine and deep arguments of Calvin, these his Treatises may fall: and, by the glad and thankful perusal of them, their minds may be informed and enlarged into the length, breadth, and depth, of that "sure foundation" on which their faith and hope repose, for eternity.

But *secondly*, Calvin speaks and writes, in these Treatises, not to the Church of Christ only, but also to the unregenerate, human-reasoning, and profane world, at large. He shows the world, as well as the Church of Christ, that the sublime doctrines of "the eternal predestination of God" and of "his secret providence" *must*, of *consequent necessity*, be true: not only from the declarations of the Holy Scripture, but from the very *nature* and *attributes* of the adorable God himself. Wherefore, these Volumes carry with them Calvin's holy, masterly, and unanswerable testimony to the whole English nation, wheresoever they may come; and this is what it was also intended, by the translator, they should do; and which it is hoped they will do, successfully; to the eternal profit of men, and to the glory of God. Hence, these Treatises will arm the disciples of Christ with weapons for their defence of the truth; as well as feed them with "strong meat" for their enjoyment, nourishment, and strength. (Heb. v. 14.)

Nor do we despair of these same Volumes being made profitable to *the ministers* of Christ: especially to his younger servants: equipping *them* also with insubvertible arguments for the Truth's defence; as well as enriching them with sound doctrine for its proclamation. And the present day is one of widely prevailing rationalism, scepticism, and infidelity. The "wise," the "scribes," and "the disputers of this world," with their "doubtful disputations," and their "oppositions of science, falsely so-called" (1 Cor. i. 20; 1 Tim. vi. 20), abound in every direction. Against all this, and all these, Calvin furnishes, in the present Treatises, the twofold materials of *Scripture* and *argument* for erecting, in any place, at any time, an impregnable tower in defence of THE TRUTH. While the same Testimonies, as being heaven-commissioned, contain in them "the arrows of the Almighty:" some of which may perhaps hit, with the sharpness of saving mercy, the hearts of a few of the enemies of the "King of kings!" and bring them to his feet! (Ps. xlv. 5.)

In this twofold respect, indeed, Calvin has commanded a field, trodden a path, and pursued a "line of things," unoccupied by any minister of Christ, with anything like the same prominence, ability, and effect, either before his day, or since He left earth for heaven. Many true servants of Christ have set forth, and still do set forth, the sublime doctrines of grace, scriptually. But they are not gifted with mental powers to prove *the necessity* of their truth, from the very nature of God himself, and from the ever unchangeable and inseparable harmony of his eternal attributes, as Calvin did throughout his ministry, and as he has done, in these his two admirable Productions. No man has occupied this sphere, nor wrought in this line of ministerial labour, with anything approaching to competent ability, since the sixteenth century; the glorious era of the Reformation. Nor has any *one* appeared qualified to perform such service to God and his Church, in the present century. In the last and the preceding centuries there

were a Dr. Owen, a Dr. Gill, a Romaine, and perhaps a few others, who possessed the mental ability, the learning, and the spiritual gifts, for the task. But they had not the "calling" of God, to that branch of his service. God did not set that "line of things" before them. The only man, in the last century, who stood at this post, with spiritual and mental endowments at all adequate to the work, was that talented servant of God, that accomplished scholar, that "burning and shining light" of the Church of England, and of the Church of Christ,—Toplady. His ministry, however, by the inscrutable will of the sovereign Disposer of all things, was as short as it was brilliant. He died at the lamented age of thirty-six; after a ten or twelve brief years' ministration; and left no successor, his like, either in the Church of England, or out of it. Nor has any equal to him, in rich experience of Divine truth, in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, or in sanctified mental talent, since appeared. Toplady did enter upon Calvin's peculiar twofold field: and his written testimonies on the stupendous doctrines now in question, are an enduring treasure to the British Church of Christ, and to her whole nation.

The above remarks, intended merely to describe the nature and merits of the Two present Treatises, will not, it is hoped, be deemed invidious or partial. They are *designed* to be solely explanatory of the state of the case, in reference to these Productions of the immortal Swiss Reformer. Even those distinguished one-in-a-century servants of God, Bunyan, equally immortal with Calvin, and that widely useful and highly honoured "master in Israel," Huntington, were wholly incompetent to execute such works as these Treatises. Those great and good men were each of memorable value and profit to the Church of Christ, in their respective centuries; and their bequeathed works and services will probably continue, especially those of the former, to the end of time. But neither of them could have occupied the field, or per-

formed the work, of Calvin. No servant of God, however great or useful, could have done, or could now do, that, but one who, to a deep experience of Divine Truth and to commanding natural powers, should have added, or should now add, a sound classical, mathematical, and logical mental training.—And a servant of Christ, thus divinely, naturally, and acquiredly qualified for his highest services, scarcely appears, we repeat, once in a century; nay, as the course of centuries has proved, in the bright and pre-eminent instances of Luther and Calvin, scarcely once in three centuries.—That no one has stood forth in the present century, or can now be found, prepared of God with this threefold equipment of grace (1 Cor. xv. 10), nature, and acquirement, for his high service, both before the redeemed Church, and before the more learned world, trained, both at the feet of Christ, and at the feet of Gamaliel (Luke x. 39; Acts xxii. 3), is a source of lamentation to all, who are competent to form a right judgment.

And *thirdly*, these Treatises it is confidently believed, (and this was a *third* motive for their translation and publication), will fully vindicate the doctrine and character of John Calvin: and unload his revered name (in the English mind at least) from that mountain of malignant obloquy and slander, which has been heaped upon it, more or less, for these three centuries past. These his own unequalled Testimonies will not only prove the might and invincibleness of his spiritual and mental powers, but will make equally manifest the holiness, the humbleness, and the adoration of his soul, as one of "the redeemed from the earth;" one of the "sealed" among men, as God's own. (Rev. xiv. 3; vii. 4.)

Nor can the translator refrain from offering, ere he close these observations, his sincere expressions of gratitude to those "Brethren and Friends" who have come thus readily and liberally forward with their 'gold and silver,' *on public grounds*, not *for themselves* only, to insure the

publication of these Volumes, when no other means of their publicity was attainable. And in these his grateful acknowledgments, he is fully assured that he is joined by those few much interested Friends, by whose counselling and arranging aid the original "PROPOSAL" was put forth.

Should, then, these two Treatises of the truthful, faithful, and able Calvin, be so honoured, as to be made of any sacred service, in edifying the disciples of Christ, and building them up in their most holy faith;—should they be found in any degree useful in equipping the friends of THE TRUTH with armour for its effective defence;—should they lend aid in silencing the clamours, shaming the slanders, refuting the doctrines, and defeating the designs, of the enemies of God and of his revealed truth, in the present day, or in future generations of the English Church of Christ; these feeble labours of their translation will have received the highest reward with which their author ever wished to be honoured.

3, *Upper Islington-terrace, London,*
June 26, 1856.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

TO

FIRST VOLUME.

"CALVIN'S CALVINISM."—This definitive title is prefixed to the present publications advisedly, and purposely; as embodying, in its expression, the *nature* of the original works of the immortal Genevese Reformer, and also the *object* of their present Translation. The originals are Calvin's testimony, and real mind, concerning the doctrines of God's electing, predestinating, and sovereign grace; while his own exposition and expression of his faith therein, satisfactorily evince, and beautifully manifest, the spirit in which he held and taught those Divine and sublime doctrines.

No servant of Christ, probably, since the days of the apostles, and of the Gospel witnesses of their century, has been more grossly misrepresented, or more maliciously maligned, than the faithful, fearless, and beloved Calvin. But the British Church of Christ shall now, (the Translator intends, under the Divine blessing,) see, and love, and admire, while the whole nation shall know, what the heavenly JOHN CALVIN really was, in his ministry, and is still, and ever will be, in his writings, as long as the originals shall survive the desolations of time.

The present and (D.V.) forthcoming TREATISES, derive a considerable accession of value and interest, from the fact, that they are the *only* productions of Calvin, which he devoted, expressly, exclusively, and purposely, to the

exposition and defence of the sublime doctrines of electing, predestinating, and persevering grace. Those glorious truths are indeed, as a matter of natural consequence, interwoven with the whole of his written and voluminous labors: which consist principally of commentaries on most, or nearly all, the Books of the Holy Scriptures. But the Two TREATISES, now under publication, are devoted wholly, by the pre-eminent Reformer, to the statement and vindication of those all-high doctrines, which formed the burden of his faith, testimony, confession, and ministry; and as such, they are signally interesting, and valuable.

There are, in the religious world, almost as many different shades, phases, kinds, and degrees, of *Calvinism*, as there are *Calvinists*, (or professors of the doctrines of Calvin,) and almost as many diverse opinions on the faith and character of the Reformer himself. But, (as the present Translator has already remarked,) he now presents the Church of Christ in England, and the British public in general, with (they may rest fully assured) "CALVIN'S *own* CALVINISM."

CALVINISM is a designation, by which the doctrines of the sovereign grace of God have been distinguished for the last two centuries; but, more particularly and generally, for the last century. The term derives, of course, its descriptiveness, from the historical fact, that the eminent Swiss Reformer was the chosen servant of God, appointed by Him to proclaim and defend, more prominently than any cotemporary or antecedent witness, the sublime doctrines in question. Not that these stupendous truths originated with Calvin, but with God himself. They form an essential portion of the revelation of his Word. They are no more Calvin*ism*, than Augustin*ism*, or Luther*ism*, or Bucer*ism*, or Cranmer*ism*, or Latimer*ism*: for they are Bible*ism*: and they are the *ism* of every saint, and true minister of Christ: they are the solidity and security of all true religion: they are the

fast-hold of faith: they form a substantial ingredient in every true ministry of the Gospel: and they constitute an essential doctrine in the confession of every true Church of Christ. Hence it is, that the truthful and faithful Reformers interwove it with the whole worship and services, and laid it at the foundation of the confession, of the Church of England!

The admirable Calvin has treated this stupendous subject with all the penetrating acumen, and commanding might, of mind, with which he was peculiarly endowed by nature; and with that accuracy, conclusiveness, and force of logical argument, of which he was a perfect and powerful master. These natural and acquired qualifications for his important task, enabled him to discover, at the farthest distance, the subtle aims of his opponents, in all their hostile reality; and to establish against them a self-defending bulwark of Divine Truth, with impregnable and lasting solidity: while "the unction from the Holy One," with which he was himself anointed, as a son and a servant of the Most High (1 John ii. 20), sanctifying all his intellectual and literary powers, has rendered these holy and masterly TREATISES as much a delight and a profit to the Church of Christ, as an exposure, refutation, and condemnation of the world;—of human reason, scepticism, and infidelity. The crowning success of the whole, however, is, that the God of Truth is greatly glorified, by this his noble and edifying witness's indestructible testimony!

When Martin Luther had by the "hammer" of God's "word" (Jer. xxiii. 29), beaten to atoms the mighty pile of superstition, idolatry, hypocrisy, formality, "will-worship," work-worship, and infinite "abominations," erected by the twelve-centuries labor of the antichristian HARLOT OF THE WORLD! and had based on its prostrate and exposed ruins, the great cardinal doctrine of salvation,—*Justification by Faith!*—the Church of Christ, thus reformed, and "turned from dead works to serve the living God" (1 Thess. i. 9), soon required, under her characteristic

infirmities, a stability and confidence, in her newly 'given faith' (Ephes. ii. 8); and a security, that should assure her of its appointed "end;"—'the salvation of the soul.' (1 Pet. i. 9.) The great and merciful Head of his Church, seeing this, raised up John Calvin, and divinely and powerfully equipped him to go forth, and minister to the yet unassured Church, the doctrines of his electing, predestinating, and immutable grace; founded on his sovereign will, and inscrutable purpose. These glorious doctrines formed then, as they do now, and ever will do, "chambers" (Is. xxvi. 20, and Song i. 4), into which believers might enter; and "beds" upon which they might securely and eternally rest (Is. lvii. 2, and Ps. cxlix. 5). Thus, a scope and foundation were given for the assurance of faith, as broad and as sure as the Eternal Mind!

The human and unregenerate mind, however, utterly incapable of soaring to an adequate and reverential contemplation of these all-high and supernatural truths, has ever fallen back, dazzled and confounded, upon its own vain, ineffectual, and often irreverent and profane reasonings. (1 Cor. ii. 14.) These reasonings, in all their forms, the present work of Calvin meets, exposes, refutes, and condemns. It explains the real nature of these sublime mysteries, and exalts them, in triumph, over all the reason, pride, and malice of the "natural man." Nor has there ever been, nor is there now, nor is there likely to be, an opposing argument of unsanctified reason, which the present Works do not state, or anticipate, expose, and refute.

And wherever the "natural man," unrenewed and untaught by the Spirit of God, *does* receive the sublime doctrines of grace "in the letter" of them, (for myriads of such receivers there ever are!)—planted as they then must be, in the soil of a graceless, hard, unbroken, and unhumbled spirit; such professors of them, state them, expound, teach, preach, and enforce them, in a manner immeasurably beneath their highness and their holiness;

—in a manner, tainted, more or less, with irreverence, if not with presumption, or even with profanity. Such an unsanctified method of setting forth the sublime verities of electing and predestinating grace, can never *profit* either sinner or saint; but must create, in both, grief, or offence, or disgust. But where these mighty truths are taught by the Spirit of their glorious Author, which is ever the case with all the children of God, ministers and people ("All thy children shall be taught of the Lord," Is. liv. 13), their profoundly reverent tenure, and their holy exposition, are always inseparably united. When thus received and deposited in the broken and humbled hearts of the disciples of Christ, under "the unction that teacheth" (1 John ii. 20), they will be held, without exception, in all humility, reverence, and adoration; and under their saving influence, the prostration of soul before their majesty, will be equal to the confidence they inspire, and to the triumph of faith over sin, death, and hell, which they secure. In a word, they will ever be held and taught, by all who are saved by them, as they were by the heavenly John Calvin, the possessor, teacher, and defender of their truth, their value, their sublimity, and their incomprehensibility.

There is not, perhaps, an *extra*-Bible saint recorded or known, in whom can be found greater humility, meekness, contrition, reverence, and adoration, than are evident throughout the life, ministry, and writings of John Calvin. In him, therefore, all the "family of heaven" (Eph. iii. 15) on earth, find not only a burning and a shining light, as an eminent servant of Christ; but a holy, humble, and loving brother, a broken-hearted fellow-sinner, a saved fellow-saint, and a profound fellow-worshipper: a "lamb" before the saints, but a "lion" before the world: a "lamb" *before* God, but a "lion" *for* God! One with whom they can "see eye to eye" (Isa. lii. 8) in all Divine things; while they gladly bow before the authority and power of his testimony!

Illegitimate Calvinists (as sound divines and faithful men have, during the last century, correctly designated the graceless *imitators* of Calvin) know nothing of the spirit or religion of Calvin; nor *can* they know *either*, because they possess *neither*. We have already described their spirit, their profession, and their teaching; which are as far and as diverse from those of Calvin, as darkness from light; as the "spirit which is from above," from the spirit which is from the earth, or from beneath. They neither know Calvin's religion, nor can have any fellowship with him therein, nor he with them. These illegitimate representatives of the humble and holy Reformer, being unregenerate persons, are often unholy, as well as unhumbled men. They are frequently *Antinomians* in doctrine, if not in practice. Not so was Calvin. He was as holy as he was truthful; as humble as he was fearless; as remarkable for his chastity as for his intrepidity. Were he now on earth, he would not acknowledge these characters as his legitimate offspring. One hour's attempt to hold communion with them, would force from him that solemn sentence which will, it may be feared, be one day pronounced on them by "a Greater" than Calvin,—"I know you not!"

It has been a matter of much wonder to the Translator, that no *English* versions of these important Treatises of Calvin—the present, and that of which *notice* is given at the commencement of the present volume, have ever appeared; for they embody the very faith, and testimony, and ministry of the prominent Reformer. It is surprising that none of those good and industrious men, who translated into English that invaluable and imperishable work, Luther "On the Galatians," and those other standard *reformative* productions, Luther "On the Psalms of Degrees," Luther's "Sermons," Calvin "On Job," and Dean Nowel's "Catechism," &c., &c., did not give the British Church an English version of the present Treatises. Yet so it is. No English Translation of these two pro-

ductions has ever appeared till the present, and the (D.V.) immediately forthcoming publications.

That no English *illegitimates* ever undertook the duty of representing, in English, their *pretended* father, is no marvel at all. The work must have been by far too hot for them to undertake. Their labour would have condemned and consumed their religion, as fast as they proceeded. Calvin's truth would have crushed and annihilated their error; his light would have discovered and exposed their darkness; his life would have awe-struck their death; and his holy fire would have consumed their graceless profession to ashes. No one, indeed, could faithfully and really translate Calvin, or Luther, or any other kindred servant of God, but a true participator in the religion of the original authors. One of a general acquaintance with the Latin, or French, or German languages of the original productions, might trans-vert the one language into another, but he could not trans-convey the mind, and most certainly could not trans-fuse, the saving spirit, of his author, whether Calvin or Luther. None could do this but a partaker of Calvin's or Luther's spirit, faith, and religion.

Whether it be the intent of the present meritoriously labouring "Calvin Society" to translate into English the two Treatises now under publication, the present Translator knows not. If it be so, there must lie in the way of every general English lover of Calvin, a very formidable pecuniary impediment. He could not procure *either* of these Treatises, without purchasing the whole of the already-issued series of the Calvin Society, amounting to forty or more volumes. The sight of this serious difficulty formed one portion of the present Translator's resolve to undertake his delightful task; knowing that he could thereby put these invaluable relic-testimonies into the hand of any *English* reader, for a moderate sum; and thus render the British Church of Christ a considerable monetary help, and confer upon her a lasting benefit:

thus furnishing, for her perusal and profit, TWO invaluable productions of the Geneva Reformer, which had lain unprofitable to her, and unknown by her, for above 300 years! *

One word more, in conclusion. — Above 300 years ago, were the divine contents of these Treatises penned by Calvin. But such is the enduring and unchangeable nature of all Divine Truth and its confession, that these testimonies of the beloved Reformer, which flowed from his heart, to be left, by his pen, on the pages of the originals, still meet, even when re-clothed in a different language, the spirits of all the 'family of heaven,' (Eph. iii. 15) as they read them, with the same divine life, freshness, and unction, as they would have been felt, if heard from the heart-supplied lips of John Calvin, at Geneva. So blessed, glorious, and true, is that word,— "For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting: and HIS TRUTH endureth from *generation* to *generation!*" (Ps. c. 5.)

If by the Divine blessing upon the present Translations, the disciples of Christ shall be comforted, and their faith confirmed; if the lovers of THE TRUTH shall be rejoiced and its defenders re-armed; if reasoners shall be rendered dumb, and infidels confounded and ashamed; if the Church of Christ shall be edified and God glorified; the Translator's satisfaction, object, and reward, will have been fully and abundantly realized.

* Since this paragraph was written, the "Calvin Society" has *discontinued* its operations; and these TWO TREATISES have *not been*, nor, of course, are now *intended to be*, translated by them.

3, *Upper Islington-terrace, London,*
December 27th, 1855.

A DEFENCE,

ETC., ETC.

INTRODUCTION

BY JOHN CALVIN

TO HIS

DEFENCE OF THE SECRET PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

THE moment I think of speaking upon that Providence of God, by which He governs, not only the vast machinery of the whole world and each smallest part of it, but also the hearts and the actions of men; a mighty and complex subject presents itself before me. But as I have already treated of the stupendous matter, in a manner calculated, I hope, to satisfy, in a measure, all sound-minded and unprejudiced readers; I shall only touch it, in a summary and passing manner, upon the present occasion; adopting all possible brevity. Nor indeed can any splendour of speech be expected from me, nor any brilliancy of thought, that shall correspond with the magnitude and excellency of the theme. I shall merely recapitulate, in a few bare words, those arguments which I have fully developed in my "INSTITUTES." But if I shall see such need, I will now interweave, with these arguments, some further testimonies from the Holy Scripture. And I shall also, as I hope, so wash away, by a plain *refutation*, the designing and malignant cavils of PIGHIUS,* and his fellows;† that they shall not, in the least degree, hurt or hinder the minds of the godly.

* To silence whose clamorous opposition to the doctrine of "the eternal election of God," Calvin wrote the preceding TREATISE.

† Such, for instance, as the present "CERTAIN WORTHLESS CALUMNIATOR."

By Providence, we mean, not an unconcerned sitting of God in heaven, from which He merely observes the things that are done in the world; but that all-active and all-concerned seatedness on his throne above, by which He governs the world which He himself hath made. So that God, as viewed in the glass of his Providence, is not only the Maker of all things in a moment, but the perpetual Ruler of all things which He hath created. That Providence, therefore, which we ascribe to God, pertains as much to his operating hands, as to his observing eyes. When, therefore, God is said to rule the world by his Providence, we do not merely mean, that he maintains and preserves that order of nature which He had originally purposed in himself; but that He holds and continues a peculiar care of every single creature that He has created. And true and certain is the fact, that as it was the *wonderful wisdom* of God that originally made the world, and disposed it, in its present beautiful order; so, unless the *omnipotent power* of God, ever present, sustained it thus created, and disposed it, it could not continue in its designed order and form, one hour.

That the sun rises upon us day by day; that, in a course so rapid, his rays should be so tempered, and his degrees so adjusted; that the order of the stars, so wonderfully arranged, should never be disturbed; that the vicissitudes of the seasons should recur so continuously; that the earth should open her bowels with such annual regularity for the nourishment of man; that the elements and their separate particles should not cease to perform their appointed functions; in a word, that the fecundity of nature should never be worn out nor fail;—all this marvellous operation, co-operation, and continuance, can surely never be thought to proceed from any other cause than from the directing hand of God! And what else is the 104th Psalm, but a long and loud praise of this universal Providence! The apostle Paul lauds this same Divine Providence, when he says, "For in Him we live, and move,

and have our being." (Acts xvii. 28.) Wherefore, as the one only God has an essence peculiar to himself; so, that *living principle* of vegetation by which all creatures subsist, and without which they must soon perish, must be considered, by faith, a *secret infusion* of God.

But the knowledge of a general and universal Providence is vague and confused; unless we hold, at the same time, the belief, and indulge the contemplation, that God covers, under the wings of his care, each *single one* of his creatures. To teach us this glorious lesson was the object of Christ, when he said, "That not a sparrow that is sold for half a farthing falls to the ground without the heavenly Father's knowledge." (Matt. x. 29.) In considering this special Providence of God, however, by which He secretly broods over the care of each individual creature, as the work of his hands; it will be necessary that we take a sacred view of the certain degrees, and distinct peculiarities, which it divinely embraces.

As man is the noblest work of God; for whose "good" all things were created which the heavens and the earth contain; the Scripture sets forth the Providence of God, as concerned, principally, in the care and government of the human race. Paul, in explanation of that passage, "thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn," observes, "Doth God take care of oxen?" implying, that the providential care of God does not rest on them, in particular, as its peculiar sphere of action; but is more especially employed in the care of men. In this respect, as the course of the Divine Providence lies in the dealings of God with men, as beings endowed with reason, its conduct assumes a surer light and a brighter glory. For marvellous are the judgments of God; at one time, in punishing the wicked; at another, in teaching the faithful patience, and crucifying their flesh; at another, in purging out the wickednesses of the world; at another, in awakening the sleep and sloth of many; at another, in breaking down the arrogance of the proud; at another, in making the

wisdom of the wise a laughing-stock; at another, in destroying the machinations of the malicious. On the other hand, the surpassing *Goodness* of God is brightly displayed, in succouring the distressed; in protecting and defending the cause of the innocent; and in coming to the assistance of those who are in despair of all help. The 107th Psalm contains a beautiful and glorious description of that conduct of the Providence of God, which is manifested towards men. In that Psalm, the prophet shows that those vicissitudes, which men generally consider violent floods of change; are not waves of trouble, rolling over men with blind impetuosity, as it were; but bright glasses, wherein to behold the *goodness*, the *wrath*, or the *justice* of God! And at the close of this blessed Psalm, the penman of it draws the concluding *inference*, that if the godly and the "wise" would duly "observe" these various changes in the world, they would gain understanding in the ways of God, and would find abundant cause for rejoicing. While the Psalmist also implies, that the same contemplation, if exercised by the wicked, would stop their mouths; by giving them an awe-striking sight of the wonderful works of God!

But here we must take a view of other and loftier steps of the Divine Providence. For though God thus shows himself the Father and the Judge of the whole human race; yet, as the CHURCH is his sanctuary in which He resides, He there manifests his presence by clearer and brighter proofs; He there shows himself as the Father of his family, and condescends to grant a nearer view of himself, if I may so speak. The Scripture is filled with testimonies of this: which declare that God keeps a more especial watch over *the faithful!* "The eyes of the Lord (saith David) are over the righteous." (Ps. xxxiii. 21.) "He preserveth the souls of his saints." (Ps. xcvii. 10.) "For he careth for you," saith Peter. (1 Pet. v. 7.) "Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered," saith the Lord himself. (Matt. x. 30.) In a word, the Church is the great *work-room* of God, wherein, in a more especial manner, He

displays his wonderful works: and it is the more immediate theatre of his glorious Providence.

For this reason it is, that God is said to have appointed angels, which are as it were his hands, to be guardians, in a peculiar manner, to his saints that believe in Him; that the angels, also, might have no separate position or office, apart from the body of Christ; of which they also are members. Therefore, that we may take a circumspective and comprehensive view of the whole Divine matter;—our eyes must rest, *first*, on that general *government* of the whole world, by which all things are cherished and caused to vegetate, that the natural state of them all, collectively and individually, may remain, and be preserved, *the same*. *Secondly*, our eyes must rest on the *watchfulness* of God, in ruling and guarding the single parts and particles of all these created things: which watchfulness is such that nothing occurs in them or concerning them, unknown or unnoticed. We must look, *thirdly*, at God's more especial care *of the human race:* which is such, that the life and death of men, the public destinies of kingdoms and of nations, and the private cases of individuals, and whatsoever men usually ascribe to fortune, are under his heavenly rule and disposal. And *lastly*, we must contemplate that peculiar *protection* by which God defends *his Church:* in which protection, he more expressly manifests his presence and his power.

The vast and multiform *utility* of this doctrine, no words can adequately express. Nor will any one profitably contemplate the Providence of God, in the government of the world, as it is set before us in the Scriptures, and seen by faith, but he, who, feeling that he has to do so with his Maker, and with the Creator of all things, first 'bows the head' with that awe and reverence, and with that humility, which becomes one standing before such stupendous Majesty! For if man is ever wont to pay such honour to his fellow-men, as to judge of their works with candour and modesty; especially where anything seems

somewhat obscure and difficult to comprehend, at the moment;—if man, in such cases, is the more anxious and diligent in inquiring into the truth; and would rather suspend his judgment, than, by a hasty decision, do his fellow-man an injury; is it not, I ask, worse than madness, and something more than ferocity, to use a tenfold greater liberty with God, and to bring his stupendous works down to the scale of our puny judgment?—to pronounce a precipitate opinion upon things infinitely sublime, and wholly incomprehensible?—to attempt to fathom his secret counsels?—and, above all, to trifle with mysteries so deep, and so profoundly adorable? This insolence has, indeed, stalked abroad in all ages; but has taken greater strides and made louder boasts, in the present day, than in any age or time preceding. Many infidels, now-a-days, finding that they cannot tear God down from heaven (which, like the giants of old, they really attempt to do), strive mightily, at least, to force out of their own, and all other men's consciences, every particle of religion and of true worship, by vomiting forth the foulest and basest blasphemies;—thus betraying their profanity, and their rage against God and his truth.

In the greater part of these characters, the source of all the evil is evidently this;—Being persons of a light and fervid spirit, they first give indulgence to their own vain curiosity. Then, having no fixed aim or object before them, they give themselves up to utterly useless speculations. Upon the back of this, comes an unbridled audacity; which instigates their tongues to speak, with a rashness, exactly commensurate with their impudence.—Others again, are the subjects of an evil state of spirit; different indeed, but just as mischievous. For bewildering themselves in absurd dreams, they drown their minds in self-will, or desperation, or sloth. Now all these are the very wiles of the devil. And his object in adopting them is, to involve the true, sound, and holy doctrine, in all sorts of 'lying wonders' of inventions: by which means he would

not only rob us of all its profitableness and fruit; but would also render it either contemptible, or hateful, or destructive. But whatsoever plans the devil may adopt, be it ours ever to steer clear of the perverted caution to which some have recourse; who, to meet such perils as these, find no shorter way, than the obscuring or corrupting that, which the Scripture declares, with all possible and naked simplicity.

Now, a much more appropriate and effectual remedy for all these evils is, to hold our minds under the constant consideration *in what manner* and *to what end* the Providence of God should be contemplated.—The *first end* is, that it may keep us free from all presumptuous confidence, and hold us fast in the fear of God; and also may stir us up to continual prayer.—A *second end* is, to bring us to rest upon God, with still and peaceful minds, and to teach us to despise, in all courage and security, the dangers which surround us on every side, and the numberless deaths which constantly threaten us from every quarter. Each of these great *ends* I will now, with all possible brevity, endeavour to explain. Those who imagine that there is any such a thing as *fortune* or *chance*, or who expect anything from their own industry, or plans, or labours, are carried hither and thither after every expedient, are driven in all directions, turn every stone (as they say), devise every new means, and gallop about like the horse in an open field. But with all this to do, there is no prayer!—no fear of God!

He, however, who knows and feels that men and their counsels, and the issues of all things, are ruled, and overruled, by the Providence of God, will confess with trembling, as did the prophet Jeremiah, "I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. x. 23.) Bearing in mind also those words of Solomon, ("A man's goings are of the Lord: how can a man, then, understand his own way?") (Prov. xx. 24); he will commit himself wholly unto

God, and depend entirely upon Him. Where there is such a state of mind, prayers will ever follow,—that God will begin and perfect every work which we undertake, while we thus rest on Him, in all quietness, and on Him alone. Just in the same degree, will he, who dreams about the will of fortune, give himself up to be driven about, in fear, by the devil, and by the wicked, as by ferocious brute animals;—as if *they* could do anything of themselves! And thus will such an one fret and fume with perpetual anxiety: and, looking at his life, as hanging continually by a single thread, as it were, he will live in unending torment. He will scarcely be able to put forth one foot, without despairing of his life or well-being. Whereas, the faithful, having the all-ruling hand of God ever before them, will never hesitate to cast all their cares and concerns upon Him. And they will all the while rest assured, that the devil and all wicked men, whatever tumults they may cause, are not only held of God, by their feet, in chains; but are compelled to do his pleasure: under which assurance, they will pass their lives in security and peace.

The two following distinctions will also throw a Divine light upon this sacred matter. The Providence of God is to be viewed with reference to *all time past;* as well as in connexion with *all time future.* In contemplating the Divine Providence of the former, all power is to be ascribed to God in all things (whether viewed *with* their *means*, [*media*] *without* their *means*, [*media*] or *contrary* to their mediums [*media*]);—that God ordains and appoints all things. The consideration of the *time past* should be thus;—If anything has taken place successfully, and in fulfilment of a mortal man's wishes, let him not "sacrifice to his own drag" (as Habakkuk expresses it); nor let him speak of his own prudence, virtue, or good fortune; nor give that praise to man, nor to any creature, which is due to God alone. But let him ever feel assured, that God was the first cause and author of all his good, through what *secondary* medium soever it came. And in the case of all

preceding adversities, let a man rest in the consolation, that all took place, according to the good pleasure of God. For, by complaining and contending against God, I shall profit myself nothing, and shall bind myself in the chain of the guilt of impious obstinacy against my Maker. And let a man so entertain the memory of his *past life*, as to *acknowledge*, in all the *punishments* he has endured, *the sins* he has committed, which caused them.

With reference to the *time future*, the Providence of God is to be contemplated by all godly minds, thus;—Let the minds of the godly be ever intently fixed on God's *promises* and *threatenings*. For as soon as their minds turn aside from these, they are shut up against all instruction in the fear of God; and the progress of faith ceases. But he who shall always keep his eye fixed on the Omnipotence of God; as seen in the glass of his Word, and shall rely on his promises, therein also contained, will mount on the wings of faith above all the countless perils of the world. And then, bowing before the threatenings of God, also beheld in his Word, he will humble himself, under the sight of them, as so many rods.

When I spoke of the providence of God being viewed *with* its *mediums;* my meaning was this;—If any one shall have assisted his fellow-man, when sunk under an extremity of distress, the deliverance rendered by the hand of man is not a *human*, but a *Divine* deliverance. The sun rises day by day: but it is God that enlightens the earth by his rays. The earth brings forth her fruits: but it is God that giveth bread: and it is God that giveth strength by the nourishment of that bread.—In a word, as all inferior and secondary causes, viewed in themselves, veil, like so many curtains, the glorious God from our sight (which they too frequently do); the eye of faith must be cast up far higher; that it may behold the hand of God, working by all these his instruments. But in what manner the Providence of God *can* work, without any medium or instrument at all, Christ taught us by his own

example; when He repelled the assaulting *Tempter* with this shield; "Man doth not live by bread only: but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God doth man live." (Matt. iv. 4.) For as the Redeemer knew that the power of God needed no external support whatever; so He knew that He could supply that strength *without* bread; which He is nevertheless mercifully pleased to supply *by means of* bread.

And O! what glory is due to the Providence of God, when viewed *contrary* to all *means* (*media*)!—When I am persuaded, that it is mightier than all obstacles that can oppose it! By this confidence alone, I am conqueror of every fear or apprehension. Indeed, this is the very wrestling-school, in which God exercises and tries our faith. When so many obstacles present themselves before us, which seem likely to prevent his designs (as *we* view them); how many creatures appear in a threatening form, above and below, in heaven and in earth! And what, in such case, is to be done? If our faith can but mount up to the Divine height of the *power* of God, it will combat and conquer, with no great trouble, all the *means* (*media*) which stand in its way, and which strive to prevent its victory.—Whosoever, therefore, shall restrain himself within these bounds; and shall neither torture himself with perplexed speculations, nor make an excuse for indolence, because he hears that God alone doeth all things;—such an one shall neither sink under despair, nor turn aside to frivolous reasonings; which are wholly unbecoming, in the presence of the Majesty of God.

But we must now examine this sacred subject still more narrowly.—Whence arise *contentions* about the Providence of God? The Divine Providence itself, rightly considered, and contemplated, as it ought to be, genders no contention. But human reason, when considering the works of God, finding itself blind, rushes into a quarrel with its Maker. But what marvel! if those counsels of God harmonize not with fleshly reason, which the angels,

with uplift eyes, wonder at, and adore! This depravity, however, is utterly intolerable;—that we, who by nature are hardly gifted with worthiness to creep, as worms, on the earth, should approve of nothing, but that which, as if lying on the ground, we can look down upon with our natural eyes. But in order that this Divine doctrine of the Providence of God may become profitable; it will be, we hope, a useful labour, in us, thus to calm the minds of the ignorant and inexperienced, and to refute the 'SLANDERS' of the wicked and profane.

For these ends, it will be desirable to consider, in the first place, that *the will of God* is the great *cause* of all things that are done in the whole world; and yet, that God is not the author of the evils that are done therein. But I will not say, with Augustine, which however I readily acknowledge to have been truly said by him,—"In sin, or in evil, there is nothing *positive*." For this is an acuteness of argument, which, to many, may not be satisfactory. I would rather assume another *principle* of argument, and say, "Those things which are *vainly* or *unrighteously done by man*, are, *rightly* and *righteously*, the *works of God!*" And if this should appear to some, at first sight, to be paradoxical, or self-contradictory; let not such be so fastidious or hasty as not to inquire, with me, into the Word of God, and see how the Divine matter stands, as viewed in that glass. But again, that I may not defend anything with senseless pertinacity, as belonging properly to God, which I have only ascribed to Him myself, by my own opinion; let us hear what the Scripture really testifies; and let us form our definition of the works of God wholly from thence. As to all those things, which God really directs by his counsel, but which, as generally viewed, seem to be fortuitous,—concerning all such things, the clear testimony of the Scripture runs thus, "The lot is cast into the lap, but the *whole disposing* thereof is of THE LORD!" (Prov. xvi. 33.) In like manner, if a branch falling from a tree, or an axe

slipping out of a man's hand unawares, should fall upon the head of a passer-by and kill him; Moses testifies, that GOD did this, according to his Divine purpose (Deut. xix. 5); who *willed* that *that* man should be killed. Other Scripture testimonies to the same purport, I here advisedly leave unadduced: because my intention is only to point at them with my finger, on the present occasion. But since the Stoics found, on such arguments as these, their doctrine of *necessity;* the true doctrine of the will and purpose of God is hateful to many; even to those who dare not condemn it, as false. But this doctrine of *Stoical necessity* is an old calumny laid upon us; under the burden of which, Augustine frequently complains that he was bowed down. It ought to have ceased, long ere this. But certainly, for men professing any honesty, or candour, or faith, to lay such a reproach upon us, is most unworthy of them, and most disgraceful.

What the vain imagination of the Stoics was, is well known. They wove their doctrine of *fate* out of Gordias' web of *complex causes* in which, when they had entangled God himself, they fabricated certain golden chains (as the fables have it) to bind the very God of heaven, and to make Him *subject* to *inferior* and *secondary causes!* The Stoics are imitated by the astrologers of the present day; who make their doctrine of *fated necessity* out of certain positions of the stars. We leave the Stoics then to their doctrine of *fate:* while we acknowledge the *will of God* to be the *ruling cause* of all things. But to take *contingency* out of the world, altogether, would be absurd. I omit to notice, here, those various distinctions which are made, in the schools. That which I shall adduce, shall be simple, in my judgment, and not strained; and also, that which shall be profitable for the conduct of life.

I would argue, then, in this manner. — What God hath *decreed* must *necessarily* come to pass; yet so, that what does thus come to pass is not, in itself, really and naturally, *a necessity*.—We have a familiar illustration of

this, in the bones of Christ our Lord. The Scripture plainly testifies, that Christ assumed a body in all things like unto ours. Wherefore, no man in his senses will hesitate to confess, that the bones of Christ's body were frangible, like our own. There appears to me, however, to be another and a separate question involved, in this matter;—whether any bone of Christ's *could* be broken? For, according to God's decree and Word, it was necessary that all the parts of his body, should remain whole, *unbroken* and uninjured.—Not that I am thus speaking and arguing, because I wholly object to the received forms of expression, when men speak of *necessity* as being, in one sense, *absolute;* or when they speak of *the necessity of the consequent*, or *the necessity of the consequence.* But I speak *thus*, and argue *thus*, that no subtlety of reasoning might prevent the simplest reader from understanding and acknowledging the truth of what I testify.—If, therefore, we consider the *nature* of the bones in the body of Christ; they were *frangible;* or capable of being broken. But if we look at the *decree of God* which was fulfilled in its time, the bones of Christ's body were no more *subject* to fracture, than the angels are *subject* to human sorrows. In this case, therefore, when we are required to look into the law and order of nature, as appointed of God, I by no means reject the *contingency* involved; in my sense and meaning of *such contingency.*

We must here also carefully bear in mind, that principle which I have before laid down;—that when God displays his power through *means* (*media*) and *secondary causes*, *that power* of his is never to be *separated from* those *means*, or inferior causes. It is the excess of a drunkard to say,—'God has decreed all that is to come to pass; and that *must* come to pass; *therefore*, to interpose any care or study, or endeavour of ours, is superfluous and vain.'—But since God prescribes to us what we ought to do, and *wills* that we should be the *instruments* of the operation of his *power;* let us ever deem it unlawful in

us to sunder those things which He hath joined together. For instance; God, "in the beginning," commanded the earth to bring forth every kind of herb and fruit, without any human art or culture. But now, He makes use of the hand of man, as the instrument of his operation: If any one should boastingly desire to receive bread by merely opening his indolent mouth; *because* the blessing of God fructifies the earth; he would not only, by such a boast, trample underfoot the Providence of God, but would do away with it altogether. For he would separate and rend asunder those things, which God has joined together, by an inseparable connexion.

Wherefore, with reference to the *time future;*—since the events of things are, as yet, hidden and unknown; every one ought to be as intent upon the performance of his duty, as if nothing whatever had been decreed concerning the issue, in each particular case. Or (to speak more properly) every man ought so to hope for success, in all things which he undertakes at the command of God, as to be freely prepared to reconcile every *contingency*, with the sure and certain Providence of God. The Lord, moreover, promises his blessing upon the work of our hands. By this promise, each godly man will acknowledge himself to be appointed of God, an instrument of his glorious Providence. And such godly one, relying on this same promise, will gird himself with alacrity to his undertaking: and will be persuaded, that he is not casting into the air labour in vain: but, resting on the Word of God, he will believe that God, by his *secret counsel*, will direct all his labour to the issue that shall be best. In a word, as the Providence of God, rightly considered, does not bind our hands, but free them for work; so, it not only does not hinder prayer, but strengthens and confirms its earnestness.

A like sobriety of mind ought to temper our judgments concerning the *time past*, and in reference to things which may have already taken place. There is no exhortation more conducive to patience, than our hearing, that nothing

happens by chance: but that whatever takes place, is the fulfilment of that which has been *decreed* by 'the good pleasure' of God. Meanwhile, it by no means follows, that our own indolence, or rashness, or thoughtlessness, or some other fault, is not the *immediate* cause of any adversity, under which we may be suffering. And though the *causes* of events are not always clearly seen, or understood; yet godly minds will not, even under such ignorance, cease to render unto God the praise of his wisdom and justice, in every event that transpires.

Where, however, the counsels, the wills, the purposes, and the attempts of men, intervene, a greater difficulty of argument and judgment presents itself to our thoughts; especially when we desire to show, *how* the Providence of God reigns and rules, in all such cases also; not only to prevent anything from being done, otherwise than according to his will; but also, that men may not even agitate anything, in their deliberations, but what He inspires. God gives indeed daily and marvellous proofs of his Providence, where He gives full rein to the foolish counsels of men; and, seeming not to notice their great preparations, frustrates, by the issue, all their hopes. The Scripture also reveals another field, wherein God manifests his dominion, and the mighty working of his hand;—when He makes the wicked mad; when He strikes them with a bewildered giddiness, or deprives them of their senses, or stuns them with stupefaction; and when also He "takes away their spirit," strips them of their courage, and so fills them with fear, that they are death-struck by the fall of a leaf! Pighius therefore wants common consideration, when he would confine God within the narrow limits of his *material creation:* when he would make of God nothing more than a kind of wise manager, or a skilful general, who, well versed in military tactics, foresees the plans of his enemies, and forms his counter-plots, as remedies, according to circumstances. As if the Scripture did not plainly represent God, as he "Who

taketh the wise in their own craftiness," cutteth off the spirit of princes, and maketh their "knowledge foolishness!" It is therefore the grossest ignorance in Pighius, when he *denies*, that when a man is killed designedly by his fellow man, he dies by the *will* and *decree* of God! He entertains this idea, I suppose, imagining that where the will of man is engaged, the will of God is not concerned! What is to become then of all those testimonies of the Scripture, which declare, that the swords of men are wielded by the hand of God? Were the sons of Eli killed without the will of man? Yet the praise is given to God;—that it was *He*, who righteously willed that they should be slain. (1 Sam. iv. 10, 11, 12.) But that God continually rules the hands of men; that He sometimes binds them fast, and at other times turns them this way and that, to execute his eternal decrees; no one will call in question, who has the least acquaintance whatever with the Scriptures. Nay, it is a fact, universally admitted by common sense, that whatsoever men undertake, the issue thereof is in the hand of God. But since even this knowledge in men is generally weak and unsettled, through the dense darkness of the human mind, the Scripture has erected for us a loftier place of observation; by standing on which, we may look around us, and behold God so ruling and overruling all the works of men, as to bring them to the issue which himself hath decreed.

The sum and substance, however, of the whole Divine matter is this;—Although men, like brute beasts confined by no chains, rush at random here and there; yet God, by his *secret* bridle, so holds and governs them, that they cannot move even one of their fingers without accomplishing the work of *God*, much more than their *own!* But the *faithful*, who render unto Him their willing service, as do the angels, are to be considered, in a peculiar manner, *the hands* of God! I am now, however, speaking more immediately of *those men*, whose purposes are anything but a desire *to do the will* of God, or

to adopt any counsel consistent, or in harmony, with his counsel, or in accordance with his will. The wicked do, indeed, frequently glory in themselves, at any accomplishment of their wishes. But the event at length proves, that they were only fulfilling, all the while, that which had been ordained of God; and that, too, against their own will; while they knew nothing about it! Moreover, God himself very frequently makes use of the wicked, to punish the sins of men; especially of his own people. And sometimes, He drags them by the neck, as it were, to make them *the instruments* of his *goodness* to men and saints.

To adduce instances of the former marvellous dispensations of his Providence, would be a labour too great, and too extensive, for our present purpose. It would however be better, perhaps, just to touch with our finger a few examples. God having excited the Assyrian to make war on Judah, calls him the "rod of his anger;" and declares, that he was armed with the "staff of his indignation," for his weapon. (Isaiah x. 5.) But the same adorable God afterwards inveighs against his pride; and rebukes him for not acknowledging himself to be "an axe" and "a saw," waged and forged by another's (God's) hand. (Ver. 15.) In this same manner, those, whom their own ambition, or cruelty, or avarice, urges on to violent deeds, are said to be "sanctified" of God, to do his work, and to be his hired soldiers, to accomplish his purposes. The Lord himself moreover testifies, that He calls such together, by his "hiss" and by his "trumpet," to take up arms in *his* cause, to perform *his* decrees. (Verse 26.) That the way of God's goodness is prepared by the evil deeds of men, one single portion of the writings of Moses will fully demonstrate. The conspiracy of the brethren of Joseph against him, was more than wicked, perfidious, and cruel, when they sold him to the Midianites. But Joseph himself transfers the *cause* of this selling him, though with a different motive, to God

himself! "Now therefore be not grieved nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. So now, it was not *you* that sent me hither but *God*." (Gen. xlv. 5 and 8.) It is evident, therefore, that though *they* did wickedly, God nevertheless did *his* work, by their means; that they might find life in death. They, as far as their own intent was concerned, had killed their brother. But, out of that intent, life (that is, provision for their natural life, and that of their whole family,) shone upon them.

We may see the same working of God in Satan, the captain of all the wicked, and the prince of all darkness and iniquities. God sends Satan to Ahab, with his own Divine command that he should be 'a lying spirit in the mouth of all the king's prophets.' Thus the impostor spirit becomes the minister of the wrath of God, to blind the wicked, who would not be obedient to his truth. On the other hand, the apostle Paul calls the "thorn in the flesh" that was sent upon him, the "messenger of *Satan* to buffet him." Here the poison of Satan is made, of God, an antidote to cure the apostle's pride. Now, what kind of a physician, I pray you, is Satan, in himself, who has never learned anything but to kill and to destroy? But God, who once commanded the light to shine out of darkness, can marvellously bring, if He pleases, salvation out of hell itself: and thus turn darkness itself into light. But what worketh Satan? In a certain sense, the work of God! That is, God, by holding Satan fast bound in obedience to his Providence, turns him whithersoever He will; and thus applies the great enemy's devices and attempts, to the accomplishment of his own eternal purposes!

Now if the Scripture did *not* clearly express God's *secondary* or *instrumental* mode of operation, *this* knot would not, even then, be very difficult to untie. The *other* and more difficult question is,—whether it is God that works in the hearts of men, directs all their

counsels, and turns their wills this way and that, and prevents them from doing *anything* but *that* which He hath decreed, they *should* do. We are not here inquiring whether or not God works all the *godly* and *holy* affections, which are found in the hearts of his people: because that is, beyond all dispute, certain. The great question is, whether He holds also in the hand of his power, all the depraved and impious affections of the wicked; and turns them hither and thither, that they might *desire* to do that which He hath *decreed to accomplish*, by *their means?*

Most certainly, when Solomon declares, that "the heart of the king is in the hand of God, and that, as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will" (Prov. xxi. 1;) his intention is to shew, generally, that not only the *wills* of kings, but all their external *actions* are overruled by the *will* and disposal of God. Moses saith, that the heart of Pharaoh was hardened by the Lord himself. It is in vain here to flee to the common refuge of God's *permission:* as if God could be said to have *done* that, which He only *permitted* to be done! And Moses positively affirms, that the hardening of Pharaoh's heart was the work of God. Nor, indeed, is the cruelty of the heart of Pharaoh ascribed to the *counsel* of God, in any other sense, than when, elsewhere, He is said to have given unto his people favour in the eyes of the Egyptians. For who does not see, that savage and ferocious beasts were tamed and made gentle by the power of God, when such men as the Egyptians were turned, on a sudden, to clemency? From what *cause*, and to what *end*, then, can we say, that Pharaoh evinced such inhuman cruelty, but *because it pleased the Lord?* partly, that He might thereby prove the patience of his people; and partly, that He might shew forth his own almighty power? In this same manner, God is said to have "turned the heart of their enemies to hate his people." (Ps. cv. 25.) Nor does that passage at all alter the case, where it is said,

that "Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also" (Exod. viii. 32); because we do not make it appear, that the minds of men are impelled by any outward influence, to do violently; nor do we impute to God the *cause* of their being hardened;—as if cruel and hard-hearted persons did not act spontaneously from their *own malice*, and become of themselves excited to obstinacy and presumption! What we maintain is, that when men act perversely, they do so, (according to the testimony of the Scripture,) by the *ordaining purpose* of God. This is also set forth, in another part of the Scripture; where it is said, that when the inhabitants of Gibeon set themselves in opposition to Israel, they did so *according to the decree and purpose of God*, who hardened their heart; as it is said, Josh. xi. 20; "For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly."

The very *manner* in which God thus works, is also set forth in the Scripture. For in one place it testifies, that God, being angry with the people, moved the heart of David to number the people: (2 Sam. xxiv. 1) but, in another place, it is said concerning this very same act of David, that the instigator of this pride, in David, was Satan; and that it was *he* who moved David to number the people. (1 Chron. xxi. 1.) From which we see, that Satan was the rod of God's wrath; and that God, by such means of devils and of men, impels the hearts of men whithersoever He will. This is still more expressly set forth in another part of the Word of God; where it is said, that "an evil spirit from the Lord came upon Saul." (1 Sam. xvi. 24, and xvi. 23.) Now Saul acted, indeed, from his *own wickedness*. He exercised the malice concealed within, by a voluntary action. Nevertheless, it was *Satan* that urged him on: and that, not while God was a mere inactive observer, but while God *willed* it. Indeed, the evil spirit could not, with propriety, have been said to be "from the Lord," unless he had been the

Lord's ordained minister, to execute his vengeance, and to be, as it were, his executioner. Nor is Satan merely the minister of God's wrath, by his instigating men's *minds* to evil passions and acts; but by effectually dragging them, and leading them captive, at his will, into wicked *actions.*

It is in this same momentous sense that Paul speaks, when he testifies, that effectual error, and "strong delusions" are sent on men, "that they might believe a lie; because they would not obey the truth." Hence you see, that Satan is not only 'a lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets,' at the express command of God; but also, that his impostures so ensnare the reprobate, that, being utterly deprived of their reason, they are, of necessity, dragged headlong into error. In this same manner also, must we understand the apostle; when he says, that those who were ungrateful to God, were "delivered over to a reprobate mind," and "given up to vile and foul affections;" that they should work "that which is unseemly, and defile their own natural bodies one among another." Upon which Scripture, Augustine remarks, that these reprobate characters were not given up to the corrupt affections of their hearts by the mere *permission* of God, as an unconcerned spectator, but by his *righteous decree; because* they had basely profaned his glory. In *what manner* this was done, that same passage of the Scripture (2 Thess. ii. 11) plainly declares;—God "sent upon them strong delusion." Whence, that which I have just stated is perfectly plain;—that the internal affections of men are not less ruled by the hand of God, than their external actions are *preceded* by his *eternal decree:* and moreover, that God performs not, by the hands of men, the things which He has decreed, without *first working* in their hearts the *very will;* which *precedes* the acts they are to perform. Wherefore, the sentiments of Augustine on these momentous points are to be fully received and maintained. "When God (says he) willeth that to be done which cannot be effected, in the course of the things

of this world, without the wills of men, He at the same time inclines their hearts to will to do it; and also himself does it; not only by aiding their hearts to desire to do it, but also by *decreeing* it; that they *cannot but* do it. Whereas, these same persons had in their own minds no such purpose, as 'to do that which the hand and the counsel of God had afore decreed to be done.'" Augustine moreover most wisely proposes *that* to be considered, concerning the very seeds and principles of nature, upon the consideration of *which* so many are unwilling to enter;—that *that great diversity* which is seen in the dispositions of men, and which is evidently implanted in them of God, affords a manifest evidence of that his *secret operation*, by which He moves and rules the hearts of all mankind.

From all that has been said, we can at once gather, how vain and fluctuating is that flimsy defence of the Divine justice, which desires to make it appear, that the evil things that are done, *are so* done, not by the will of God, but by his *permission* only. As far, indeed, as those evil things which men perpetrate with an evil mind, are, in themselves, evil; I willingly confess (as I will immediately more fully explain) that they by no means please God. But for men to represent God as sitting unconcerned, and merely *permitting* those things to be done, which the Scripture plainly declares to be done, not only by his *will*, but by his *authority*, is a mere way of escape from the truth, utterly frivolous and vain. Augustine did, indeed, sometimes give way to this popular method of speaking: but where he devotes himself more closely to the consideration of the matter, and examines it more thoroughly, he by no means suffers the *permission* to be substituted for the *act* of God.—I will not cite *verbatim* all that the holy father says upon this subject, in the Fifth Book of his Discussion of it, written against Julian. Let the production of one passage from it suffice, on this occasion;—"He who knoweth his own just judgments, doeth all these things by *working*, in

a marvellous and inexpressible manner, not only in the bodies, but in the hearts of men. He doth not *make* wills evil; but *useth* the wills of men *already* evil, as He pleaseth; nor can he, of himself, will anything that is evil." —"Just in this same manner, (continues Augustine,) does the Scripture, if diligently considered, shew, that not only the good wills of men, which God himself has made good, out of evil wills; but also the wills which He has made good by his grace, are directed, by Him, to good actions, and to the attainment of eternal life: and moreover, that those wills of men which preserve the good order of things in the world, from age to age, as kings, and princes, and rulers, &c., are so under the power of God, that He inclines them whithersoever He will: either to confer kindnesses on these, or to inflict punishments on those, according to his will and pleasure."—The holy father then adds;—"Who does not tremble before these stupendous judgments of God, by which He does whatsoever He will, even in the hearts of men, rendering unto them, all the while, according to their works!" And again; "It is fully evident, from the testimonies of the Scripture, that God works in the hearts of men to incline their wills whithersoever He pleases; whether it be to confer good, according to his mercy, or to inflict evil, according to their deserts; and all, according to his *purpose* and *decree!* which is sometimes *manifest*, and sometimes *hidden;* but always *just!* For it ought ever to be deeply fixed in our hearts, that there is no iniquity in God."—But the *reason why* the decree of God is sometimes utterly hidden, may be seen in the former part of his Book: where, after he had frequently testified, that the sins of men are often in themselves punishments, which God justly inflicts upon them, on account of former sins which they have committed; he at length carries up his contemplation to that higher and still more hidden secret of God; namely, that God finds just materials in all men, (*except those* whom He has chosen by his grace!) for making them the executors of his wrath!

"As to all mortals beside (saith Augustine) who are not of this number of God's elect, but are of the common mass of mankind (from which mass these were also chosen); they are made the 'vessels of God's wrath;' and are born for the use and service of God's chosen! For God doth not create *one* of these 'vessels of his wrath' at random, or by chance. And He knows full well every particle of good which He works, by their means. One part of which good is, that He creates in them the excellency of human nature; and adorns, by their means, as kings, princes, and magistrates, &c., the order of things in the world. But *why* God sometimes paralyzes the hearts of men with fear and dread, and sometimes enspirits them with courage;—*why* He takes away the spirits of princes, and turns the counsels of the wise into foolishness;—*why* He gifts some with the spirit of temperance, and makes others drunk with the spirit of confusion and madness;—for these his marvellous judgments, He sometimes manifests a plain and conspicuous *reason*. While it is equally evident, that his *secret counsel* so rules over all men, that He turns the wills of *whomsoever* He pleases, *wheresoever* He pleases." For human nature is common to all men: but not so, Divine grace (as the same holy father, in another part of his works, also strikingly observes).

Taking then an honest and sober review of the whole of this high and Divine matter, the plain and indubitable conclusion will be, that THE WILL OF GOD is the one principal and all high CAUSE of all things, in heaven and earth! Our minds, therefore, ought ever to be bridled with the knowledge of this mighty fact; that they may not intemperately and unlawfully indulge in searching into the *causes* of things. That saying of Augustine, "The will of God is the necessity of all things," seems harsh when first heard. As does also that which he immediately adds, by way of explanation,—that "God so ordained all *secondary* causes, that by their means *that* might be effected, for the sake of which they were ordained; but not, *necessarily* so, effected.

But that, "God ordained all *primary* and *remote* causes; that by them *that* might *of necessity* be effected, which He had purposed *to be* effected, by their causation." When the whole argument, however, is attentively investigated, its asperity soon vanishes. For that which the holy father elsewhere says, though expressed in different terms, is precisely the same in sentiment: nor does his argument contain anything which ought to offend; —"God retains (saith he), hidden in himself, the *causes* of some of his actions, which He has not intermingled with his created things. These causes He brings out to their effects; not by *that* operation of his providence, by which He has appointed certain natures and their powers to be, and to act; but by *that* operation, by which He rules and directs, as He will, the creatures that He has made."

Herein indeed lies the grace by which those are saved, who were lost.—For what can be more true, than that God, in the government of his creatures, retains, hidden in himself, something more than He has made visible in their nature? But of all the things that are done, THE WILL OF GOD is *therefore* rightly considered to be the FIRST CAUSE, *because* He so rules at his pleasure the natures of all things created by Him, that He directs all the counsels and actions of men to the *end*, which He had himself preordained. By this doctrine, as I have before justly observed, a rein is put upon our minds and spirits which ought to hold us within the bounds of modesty. For it is absurd, in the last degree, not to yield ourselves to that will of God, which is high above all other causes, *unless* we can *see* (as we think) a plain *reason* for our so doing.

We should ever indeed bear in mind, that which I have before said,—that God doth nothing without the highest of *reasons*. But as the *will* of God is the surest rule of all righteousness; *that will* ought ever to be to us the principal *reason*, yea (if I may so speak) the reason of all reasons! For that humility of faith, which is the offspring of reverence for the Divine justice, is by no means a stupid thing,

as many imagine. For who but the man that hath the persuasion deeply forced on his heart, that God is just, and all his works righteous, will rest satisfied with his good pleasure alone? That Sarbonic dogma, therefore, in the promulgation of which the Papal theologians so much pride themselves,—"that the power of God is absolute and tyrannical," I utterly abhor. For it would be easier to force away the light of the sun from his heat, or his heat from his fire, than to separate the *power* of God from his *justice*. Away then with all such monstrous speculations from godly minds, as that God can possibly do more, or otherwise, than He has done; or that He can do anything, without the highest *order* and *reason*. For I do not receive that other dogma,—"that God, as being free from all law himself, may do anything without being subject to any blame for so doing." For whosover makes God without law, robs Him of the greatest part of his glory; because he spoils Him of his rectitude and justice. Not that God is, indeed, subject to any law; excepting in as far as He is a law to himself. But there is that inseparable connexion and harmony between the *power* of God and his *justice;* that nothing can possibly be done by Him but what is moderate, legitimate, and according to the strictest rule of right. And most certainly, when the faithful speak of God as omnipotent, they acknowledge Him, at the same time, to be the Judge of the world; and always hold his *power* to be righteously tempered with equity and *justice*.

We have not yet, however, met the great objection of our adversaries,—"If all things are done (say they) according to the *will* of God, and men can do or design nothing, but as He wills or ordains, God must be the author of all evils."—That distinction which formerly prevailed in the schools, and is now everywhere current, is perfectly true; provided it be rightly understood,—"that the evil of the *punishment*, but not the evil of the *fault*, proceeds from God." But some inexperienced ones, imagining that the

matter in question can be settled in one short word, pass by, in security, the very point at issue; namely, '*How* God can be free from blame in that very deed, which He himself condemns, in Satan, and in the reprobate; and which He declares that men condemn in their fellow-men.'—For both evils are often seen in the *same* work; not in *different* works; namely, that the *praise of the punishment* must, of necessity, be ascribed to God; and the *fault of the act*, to man.—For instance, robbers carry off the cattle of the holy Job. The deed is cruel and disgraceful. Satan by this means drives the patriarch to desperation; a machination still more detestable. But Job declares *another* to be the author of it all! "The *Lord* gave (saith he), and the *Lord* hath taken away." Nor is Job wrong in attributing that to God, which, in another sense, could be imputed to the robbers, only. For the patriarch, as if beholding, with uplift eyes, the things that are decreed on the throne of God in heaven, confesses, that the Lord took away, by the hands of the robbers, those things which they could not have touched, but by his authority and command. All this Job explains in the words which follow, "The *Lord* hath done whatsoever pleased Him." We hear that, in this instance, the work of Satan was in common with that of God. We hear that nothing was done but by God's good pleasure. It may here be said,—'How shall God be exempted from that fault, of which Satan and his instruments are guilty?' Why, if a distinction be made between the works of men, derived from a consideration of their *purpose* and *end*, in each particular case; and if the cruelty of that man is condemned, who pierces the eyes of a crow, or kills a crane; while the virtue of the judge is praised, who cleanses his hands by the execution of the wicked person; shall the condition of God himself be worse than that of man! Shall not *his* justice keep *Him* separate from the wicked actions of human or Satanic offenders!

But let us adopt a similitude somewhat more close and applicable.—That prince will ever be praised among men,

who shall, by a just and legitimate war, repel from his dominions, violence, rapine, and plunder. For this *end*, he will hasten to arm thousands of soldiers; who will rush forward with cupidity to shed blood, to despoil the poor and helpless of their property, and to commit every act of licentiousness and violence: for which deeds of wickedness, *they* certainly will not deserve *praise!* Two armies, in another part of the world, enter into the mighty battle. —If you behold a prosperous issue of the skill of the general, under whose conduct and command the battle is fought, you absolve him from all blame, though he be but a mortal man; while you nevertheless condemn the soldiers who lend out their hands to murder their fellow-men, for nefarious hire. Will you, then, rob God of the glory of his *justice*, because He sometimes doth his works by means of Satan? Yet so it is. And as the mists which the earth exhales sometimes obscure the brightness of the sun, and intercept its view from the sight of men, while the sun still really remains the same, in all its brightness; so, the vanity of men creates many vaporous impediments, as it were, which obstruct their sight of the *equity* of God; while that equity remains, nevertheless, as pure and perfect as ever! Yet these ignorant reasoners would involve God, and the wicked, in the same guilt; where the act of God, working by the wicked, is, in such sense, common to Him and them. But not so did David. When Shimei assaulted him with reproaches and stones; he did not stop at *the man;* but looked at the command of God; "Let him curse (said he), for God hath bidden him." (2 Sam. xvi. 6.) And yet he does not rise up against God; but, with all humility, offers his back to the stripes; and says, "Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" (Verse 10.) As he speaks also, in the Psalms, "I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because *thou* didst it." (Ps. xxxix. 9.) For what one of the godly will not the Majesty of God, in a moment, reduce to silence? And from what one of them will not the justice

of God force the expression of praise, and constrain him to break forth into that devoted exclamation of David, "So let him curse; because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." (2 Sam. xvi. 11, 12.)

Wherefore, when the wickedness of men proceeds thus from the Lord, and from a *just* cause, but from a cause *unknown* to us; although the *first cause* of all things be his *will*;—that He is *therefore* the author of sin, I most solemnly deny. Nevertheless, that difference of causes, on which I have before dwelt, is by no means to be forgotten,—that one cause is *proximate* another *remote*. The careful observance of this distinction is indispensable; that we may clearly understand how wide a difference there is, and how momentous a distinction, between the just and equal Providence of God, and turbulent impetuosities of men. Our adversaries load us with illiberal and disgraceful calumny, when they cast it in our teeth, that we make God the author of sin, by maintaining that his *will* is the *cause* of *all things* that are done. For when a man perpetrates anything unjustly, incited by ambition, or avarice, or lust, or any other depraved passion,—if God, by his just but secret judgment, perform his works by means of such an one's hands, the mention of sin cannot be made, with reference to God, in those his righteous acts. It is perfidy, pride, cruelty, intemperance, envy, self-conceit, or some like depraved desire that constitutes sin, in man. But no such desire can be found in God. Shimei attacks his king with brutal insolence. The sin is at once manifest. God uses such an instrument, to effect the righteous humiliation of David. Such a rod, it pleases God to use. But who will dare to charge God with sin, in so doing? The Arabians and the Sabœans carry off their plunder from another man's substance. The sin of robbery is evident. God exercises the patience of his servant, by the violence of the plunderers. Let the

heroic confession of the patriarch, "Blessed be the name of the Lord," be heard, rising from out the midst of these ravages, rather than the profane revilings of the wicked and the ignorant. In a word, such is God's manner of working, by the sins of men, that when we come to deal with Him, in the matter of his righteous judgments, his eternal purity wipes off, in a moment, every spot that the wicked reasoning of men may attempt to cast upon his glorious Majesty.

And here, the admonition of Augustine may be listened to with profit.—"In point of oneness or agreement, there is sometimes a mighty difference between men and God, in the matters of his righteous acts and judgments. As when, for instance, GOD wills, *righteously*, that which MEN *will, evilly*. And when God *righteously* willeth not, that which men *evilly* will not. And so again, in point of difference, or contrariety, God and men do not ill agree. As when men *will well*, that which God, *righteously*, doth *not will*. And when, also, men, righteously, *do not* will, that which God, righteously, *doth* will.—For example; the son may wish for the death of his father, that he may rush upon the inheritance. God also may will that this same father should die.—God willed that Jerusalem should be utterly destroyed; that the temple should be profaned and demolished; and that the Jews should suffer every extreme of torment. The Idumæans were all the while longing for the same. In order that the same measure might be measured to a dire and ruthless man, who had spared no one; God wills that no help whatever should be brought to *him*, when pressed to destruction, on every side, by inevitable necessity. His own son shall refuse him every duty of affection; nor shall he have the least desire to aid him in his desperate need.—God willed that the sons of Eli should not listen to the counsels of their father; *because* He had determined to destroy them. The sons, on their part also, would not hear their father. Now there appears herein, at first sight, a certain kind of har-

mony and agreement; but when we consider, abstractedly, the evil and the good involved; there is as much disagreement and contrariety, as between fire and water. A husband shall wish for a longer life of a beloved wife, whom God calls out of this world. Christ shuddered at, and prayed against, that death, which was a sacrifice of the sweetest odour unto God. Now the will of each, both of the husband and of Christ, although diverse from the will of God, *at first appearance*, was equally without blame.—Wherefore, far be it from any man to drag God into a participation of sin, or guilt, or blame, whenever any *apparent* similitude between the plainly depraved passions of men, and his secret counsel, may present itself. Let that sentiment of Augustine be ever present to our minds,—"Wherefore, by the mighty and marvellous working of God, (which is so exquisitely perfect in the accomplishment of every purpose and bent of his will,) *that*, in a wonderful and ineffable way, is not done, *without* his will, *which* is even done *contrary* to his will: *because*, it could not have been done, had He not permitted it to be done; and yet, He did not permit it *without* his will, but *according to* his will."

And hereby is refuted, either the ignorance or the wickedness, of those, who deny that the nature of the will of God can be one and simple, if there be any other will ascribed to Him than that which is plainly and manifestly revealed by Him, in his own law. Some also ask in derision—'If there be any will of God, which is not revealed in his law,—by what name is that will called?' But those men must be deprived of their senses, in whose opinion all those Scriptures signify nothing, which speak, with so much wonder and admiration, of the profound "depth" of the judgments of God!—When Paul exclaims "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments!" he most certainly teaches us, in all plainness, that the judgment of God was something more and

deeper, than that which is expressed by the simple words of Christ, in that memorable ejaculation, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, but ye would not." (Matt. xxiii. 37.) And whereas, God *willed* that the sons of Eli should not be obedient to their father, *that* Divine *will* differed, *in appearance*, from the precept of the law: which commands children to obey their parents. In a word wherever the apostle sets forth the wonderful judgments of God, and the depth of his thoughts and ways, which are "past finding out;" he is not speaking at all of the works of the law, which stand always plain before our eyes: he is rather magnifying that inaccessible light, in which is hidden God's SECRET COUNSEL: which, being exalted far above the utmost stretch of the human mind, we are compelled to gaze upon, with uplift eyes, and to adore!

Some one will perhaps say, 'If that light is inaccessible, why do you approach it?'—I do not so approach it as to wish, by an insolent curiosity, to search into those things which God wills to keep deeply hidden in himself. But that which the Scripture openly declares, I embrace with a sure faith, and look upon with reverence. But you will say, 'How can it be that God, who is ever consistent with himself, and unchangeable even in the shadow of a turn, should yet will *that*, which is contrary to that which He seems to be?'—I reply; It is no matter of wonder that God, when speaking with men, should accommodate himself to the limits of their comprehension. Who will affirm that God ever appeared, to his servants, even in visions, such as He really is? For the brightness of his glory is such, that the sight of Him, as He is, by our naked vision, would absorb and overwhelm all our senses, in a moment. He has therefore ever so revealed himself, as men were able to bear the revelation. But whether God talks with us in the language of a child, or whether He conceals that which He knows to be beyond

our comprehension;—that there is anything in what He pleased to say, feigned or dissembled, I solemnly deny. Most true is that which the Psalm affirms, "Thou hatest all workers of iniquity." (Psalm v. 5.) Nor, indeed, does God there testify, by the mouth of David, anything else, than that which He exemplifies, in reality, every day, when He punishes men for their transgressions. Nor would He punish their sins, if He did not hate those sins. You here see, then, that God is an *avenger:* from which we are fully assured that He is not an *approver*. But many are deceived in these sacred matters: not rightly considering, that GOD *willeth, righteously*, those things which MEN *do, wickedly*. 'How will you explain this?' (you may say.)—I reply; God abominates all adulterous and incestuous intercourse. Absalom defiles his father's concubines in the sight of the people. Was this done, in *every sense*, contrary to the will of God? No! God had predicted, by his servant Nathan, that Absalom *should do* this (2 Sam. xii. 11, 12): "I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun."

The Scripture is replete with examples of the same nature and tendency. Shall we, then, on that account, either impute the cause, or fault, of sin, to God? or represent Him as having a double or two-fold will; and thus make Him inconsistent with himself? But as I have already shown, that He wills the *same* thing, in certain cases, as the wicked and profane, but in a different *manner;* so, we must, on the other hand, hold, that He wills, in the *same manner* with the wicked and reprobate, that which is in *appearance* different. So that, in those things which are presented to our minds, the *apparent* diversity is tempered with the utmost oneness and harmony. Thus, inasmuch as Absalom's monstrous impiety towards his father, was a perfidious violation of

the law of marriage, and a gross profanation of the order of nature; it is most certain that his atrocious wickedness was highly offensive to God; who can be pleased with nothing but honesty, modesty, fidelity, and chastity; and who wills that the lawful order which He has established among men, should be preserved sacred and inviolate. And yet, it pleased Him to punish, *in this manner*, the *adultery* of David. And thus, He wills *in the same manner* with men, things which *seem* to us quite diverse. For *that will* of God by which He commands what shall be done, and by which He punishes all transgressions of his law, is one, and simple.

We have before observed, that *sins* are frequently *punishments*, by which God retributively avenges men's former transgressions. In all such dispensations of his Providence, there are *two things* which claim our deep consideration;—*The just judgment of God*, by which He testifies that He hates the sin, which He thus visits with its due punishment; and *the wickedness of man*, which stands directly opposed to the will of God. If such infinite brightness should dazzle our mental vision, what wonder! when the eyes of our body cannot endure the sight of the natural sun! For is the vision of the body stronger than that of the mind? Or is the brightness of the Majesty of God, less than that of the natural sun! Wherefore, it behoves us not to be too acute in our penetration into the splendour of the Divine Majesty! Lest, in the meantime, we either deny that to be true, which the Scripture plainly teaches, and confirms by experience; or lest we dare consider this, or that, to be, as we think, not quite consistent with the character of God. "When the last day (says Augustine) shall have come,—then will be seen, in the brightest light of understanding, that, which the godly now hold in faith, until it shall be then understood, by the fullest comprehension;—how sure, immutable and all-efficacious is the will of God!—and also, how many things He can *do*, and yet not *will!*—But, that He *wills* nothing, that He cannot *do!*"

CALUMNIATOR'S

PREFACE

TO

CERTAIN ARTICLES (THAT IS, CALUMNIES)

PURPORTING TO BE EXTRACTED FROM THE WRITINGS

OF JOHN CALVIN.

You are a man, John Calvin, now known throughout almost the whole world. Your doctrine has many favourers and supporters: but it has also many enemies and opponents. For myself, being one who earnestly wishes that there were but one doctrine, as there is but one truth; and who greatly desires to see all men agree, if it were possible, in that one doctrine; I have thought, that you ought to be informed, in a friendly manner, of those things which are everywhere spoken against your doctrine; that if false, you might refute them and might have an opportunity of sending your refutation to me; that I might be able to make a stand against your adversaries. And I pray that you would frame your *refutation*, of such arguments, as may be plainly understood by the people.

There are indeed many who differ from you: and that too, in many things. For the present however I will leave all other questions to other times; and I will deal with you upon that one great subject;—the doctrine of *Fate*, or *Predestination*. For this one question is exciting vast

disturbances in the Church : all which I should be glad to see quieted. And the arguments of your opponents, on this mighty matter, are so forcible, that they cannot be refuted out of any of your books, which you have hitherto published.

Certain ARTICLES connected with this vast question have been extracted from your books, and spread abroad in all directions. These ARTICLES I will now place before you, without any regularity of order. And to each Article I will subjoin the arguments which your opponents advance against it. By this arrangement you will at once see what *reply* you are called upon to make.

REPLY
OF JOHN CALVIN
TO THE
CALUMNIATOR'S
PREFACE.

THAT there are many adversaries to my doctrine I know full well, and wonder not. For it is no new thing, that brawlers, on every side, should open their mouths against Christ; under whose banner I fight. My only grief, in the sacred matter is, that through my feeble side the solemn and eternal truth of God is stabbed; which ought to be looked upon with reverence and adoration, by the whole world. But since I see that this same truth of God has ever, from the beginning, been exposed to the calumnies of the wicked, and that Christ himself, by the decree of his heavenly Father, must ever be a "rock of offence" and of contradiction (Rom. ix. 33; Is. viii. 14, 15); I consider, that the defenders of the truth must bear this offence, with all patience. No fierce bites of the

wicked, however, will at any time cause me to repent of the doctrine which I have taught; because, I feel fully assured, that God is its origin and author. Nor have I profited so little by those numerous conflicts, in which God himself has caused me to be engaged, as now to be alarmed by your empty and futile noises.

Nay, as far as you yourself are concerned, poor masked monitor, I derive some consolation from the thought that you cannot be ungrateful towards the man, who has treated you with much greater kindness than you deserved at his hands, without betraying, at the same time, your foul wickedness against God. I know quite well that there is no sport more grateful to you Academics, than the rooting out all faith from the hearts of the godly, by casting a shade of doubt over all that they hold dear. And how sweet you feel in yourself all those revilings to be, which you direct against the "SECRET PROVIDENCE OF GOD," is apparent from the very point of your pen: how much soever you strive to hide your base gratification. But I cite you, and all your fellows, before that tribunal, on which the Judge of heaven sits: from whose mouth, the blast and the bolt, shall one day fall upon you all, and lay you prostrate. I trust, however, that I myself, before I have done, shall make your insolent speaking against God, to be as loathsome to the feelings of all good and godly men, as they are inwardly gratifying to your own heart.

You demand of me a refutation of that vain scribble of yours, which you sent secretly to Paris, from a town in Switzerland; that poison might be poured upon my name, far and wide without my knowing it; and without the possibility of the application of a remedy. You feign, nevertheless, the desire of learning the truth; and yet, you concealed your name; for what end I know not; unless it be that you well knew that I had it in my power, at once to destroy any credit that men might be disposed to give either to yourself or to your fellows. I could con-

jecture, or rather determine, in a moment, who you were, from many evidences furnished by your book. But whether you wrote it with your own hand, or dictated it to Scotus, the trumpeter employed by your band of madmen; that he might carry to Paris things that you dared not utter here, is a matter of utter unconcern to me. I would, indeed, that some other were the author of the book; or that you yourself were another man, from what you are. But that will never be, until you shall have once tasted what true virtue and honesty are. For although you have ever spoken respectfully to me; yet, how great your natural propensity to cavilling is, I had never any difficulty in discovering, and being fully assured. This evil inclination which you have indulged, in so many puerile and futile exhibitions of it, I have endeavoured to correct; but in vain. Because, to that natural propensity, there was always appended a depraved affectation; which led you to hunt after the praise for learning and wit, even by the most frigid and more than insipid attempts at jesting, on divine subjects. Nor can you by any means cover these your vain attempts, under the shadow of the authority of Socrates; who (you say) was accustomed to attack many things that were said against his doctrines, with sharp sarcasm in return. That excellent man, was one endowed with many and eminent virtues; of all which, however, he marred the brightness, by this one frailty and defect: which you thus, with as much failure as anxiety, attempt to imitate.

You moreover ask me to send you 'such a refutation of your vain script, as shall be understood by the people.'— I have never done otherwise than study to accommodate myself to the capacity of the most humble and unlettered reader; by adopting the purest and simplest language of instruction. But if you will acknowledge none other mode of *reasoning* than that which the natural mind of an earthly mortal can receive, you at once shut up against yourself, by pride and disdain, the only way of approach to the

comprehension of that doctrine, to the knowledge of which, the first step is reverence. I am by no means ignorant of the sarcastic sneers of yourself, and of all like you, who treat the deep mysteries of God with a contempt; which indicates, that, in your estimation, everything loses its grace and its authority, which does not at once meet *your* opinion and approbation. For what, pray, is the meaning of all this, that, the moment anyone chooses to open his mouth against me, I must be called upon to furnish a refutation of his *slanders?* Now Socrates, whose name you thus brandish before you, would not have suffered himself to be put in such a position. He would not have yielded to the dictation of such a law to *him.* Not that I would follow any man in everything. But if any one, not only in this, but in any other age, was ever permitted, constantly to set himself, with indignation, against the wicked, and to refute their *calumnies* against him, as Socrates did; surely, even the most malevolent and iniquitous will grant *me* also a fair opportunity of exercising the same kind of diligence, in *my* defence. Your barking, therefore, is the more intolerable. For you trample, with blind ignorance, on my numerous books of self-defence, and of reply to my adversaries; and call upon me to do the same work, of refutation, twice or thrice over.

You affirm, however, that there is *one question,* in particular, on which the arguments of my enemies against me, are too powerful to be refuted by the contents of any of my books, which I have as yet written upon the subject. That question (you say) is, the great subject of *predestination,* or *fate.* I would that you could resolve, either to inquire into that subject modestly, or to argue upon it honestly; rather than thus to cast off all shame, and to confound in one, things the most diverse from each other; in order to prevent all true light from falling upon them. *Fate* is a term given by the Stoics to their doctrine of *necessity;* which they had formed out of a multiplex

labyrinth of contradictory reasonings; a doctrine, calculated to call God himself to order; and to set Him laws whereby to work. But PREDESTINATION I define to be, (according to the Holy Scriptures,) that free and unfettered COUNSEL OF GOD by which He rules all mankind, and all men and things, and, also all parts, and particles of the world, by his infinite wisdom, and incomprehensible justice. Now if the depravity of mind, and the lust of cavilling, and diabolical pride, have so blinded you, that you can see nothing, in the mid-day light; yet to readers, who really have eyes which can see; the distinction I have laid down, shows, in a moment, the great justice and equity (!) of your quarrelling with God, in the profound matter of his "SECRET PROVIDENCE"!

Add to this, had you but been willing to look into my books, you would have been convinced, at once, how offensive to me is the profane term *fate;* nay, you would have learned, in reading my writings, that this same abhorrent term was cast in the teeth of Augustine, by the malignity and hatred of the wicked and the worthless of his day; and you would also have discovered, in my testimony, that these objections were replied to by that holy father and godly teacher, in a manner which would fully answer every purpose of my own cause and defence, upon the present occasion.

In the ARTICLES also, (purporting to be extracts from my books,) which you say you will give the public in your proposed order, you will find, that my manner and substance of argument are precisely the same with those of that holy father, of happy memory. Malevolent ones, however, knowing that this doctrine was not well known, nor generally received, have boastingly published abroad these ARTICLES; (which are partly false, and partly mutilated,) that the ignorant and inexperienced might be fired with hatred of their contents; and might not be able to form any but the most unfavourable judgment concerning them. And though many persons thought, at the first sight of them,

that the *articles* put forth in Augustine's day, were really extracts from his writings; yet, the holy father bitterly complains that they were imputed to him falsely. For the compilers of them had either put together short portions of sentences, with evil industry, or else had, with wicked art, corrupted sentences which were whole and true, and godly, by the crafty introduction of a few words; thus wholly altering the original, that they might thereby create offence in the minds of the simple. And all honest and sincere readers, (many of whom will gladly take the pains to compare my doctrine with thy base calumnies) will discover, that the ARTICLES, which you now boast you will put forth, as extracted from my writings, are of precisely the same description as those which were published abroad, in Augustine's day; purporting to be true extracts from *his* books.

And first of all I take this stand against you,—that you act neither kindly nor honestly, in not affixing any marks of designation, or reference, to the *passages* purporting to be extracts from my books; so that readers might refer to the originals, and assure themselves that I really *had* written, as the extracts represent. And what can be more iniquitous, than confusedly to state, that, in the course of fifty or more volumes, written by me, some fourteen *articles* were found of such and such a description? Now had you possessed one drop of common honesty, you would have cited, as a matter of course, my sentences, *verbatim;* or, if you had met with any doubt or danger, in so doing, from want of the realities and originals, you would have warned your readers against the *doubtfulness* of the text, in such cases; whereas now you cast a shade of doubt over *all* my writings *together;* hoping thereby to destroy all good memory of them from the earth. And thus, *that,* in my books, which might have been read without any offence at all, you have, for your own convenience, malignantly corrupted, and exposed to hatred and contempt. And though I do not altogether condemn Augus-

tine for his prudence; where, wishing to meet the craft and iniquity of his enemies, he tempers his modes of reply to them, so as to escape odium; yet, according to *my* views, my reply to you will be more generally *useful,* if I refute in this great cause, your revilings, freely, openly, and unreservedly; than if I so write, as to convey the least idea whatever of retreat or tergiversation.

ARTICLES

Extracted from the Latin, as well as the French, Books, of John Calvin,

on

PREDESTINATION.

ARTICLE I.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY I.!]

"GOD, OF HIS PURE AND MERE WILL CREATED THE GREATEST PART OF THE WORLD TO PERDITION."

This is the FIRST ARTICLE I shall produce. And now hear what arguments are brought by your adversaries, against it.

CALUMNIATOR'S

STATEMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS.

Your opponents *maintain,* that this ARTICLE is contrary to *nature;* and contrary to the *Scripture.* With respect to *nature,* they affirm that every animal loves its own offspring. Now this nature is given of God. Whence it follows, that God also loves *his* own offspring. For God would not cause all animals to love their own offspring; unless He himself loved *his own* offspring. And this posi-

tion they prove, in the following manner from Isaiah lxvi. 9; "Shall I cause to bring forth, and not cause to bring forth?" As if He had said, 'That which I cause others to do, I also do myself. Now I cause others to bring forth; therefore I also bring forth.' By a parity of reasoning, therefore, they derive this argument and its conclusion;—God causes all animals to love their own offspring. *Therefore* He himself also loves his own offspring. Now all men are the offspring of God. For God is the Father of Adam, from whom all men sprung. But, to create men to perdition, is not an act of love, but of hatred. *Therefore,* God did not create any one to perdition. And again they argue,—'Creation is a work of love, not of hatred. *Therefore,* God created all men in love, not in hatred.' And again; 'No *beast* is so cruel, (to say nothing of *man,*) that it would desire to create its young to misery. How much less, then, shall such a desire be found in God! Would not God, in such a case of creation be less kind and merciful than the wolf which He has created'? Christ argues in this way;—"If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall God?" (Matt. vii. 11.) It is just thus that your adversaries argue. They say,—If Calvin, though an evil man, yet would not wish to beget a child unto misery; how much less shall God desire to do so? These and like arguments your opponents bring forward with respect to *nature.*

But with reference to the *Scripture,* they reason thus; —God saw, that "all things" which He had made were "very good." Such therefore was man; *whom* also He had made "very good." But what if God created him to destruction! If such *be* the case, God created that which "was very good" to destruction and perdition; and therefore, He must love to *destroy!* But that is a thing impious, even in thought. And again, they argue,— God created one man, and placed him in Paradise: which is a life of happiness. *Therefore* God created all men for a happy life; for *all* men were created in the *one* man.

And if all men *fell* in Adam; it follows, that all men *stood* in Adam; and also, in the very condition in which Adam stood.—And further;—God says, 'I would not the death of a sinner;' and again, it is written, that God 'willeth not that any should perish, but that all men should come to the knowledge of the truth.' (1 Tim. ii. 4.) Farther,—If God created the greatest part of the world to perdition; it follows, that his *anger* is greater than his *mercy;* and it consequently follows, also, that his *anger* is shewn "unto the third and fourth generation." Whereas, 'it is evident, on the contrary, that his *mercy* extends 'even unto the thousandth generation!'

REPLY

OF JOHN CALVIN TO

ARTICLE I.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY I.!],

AND TO THE CALUMNIATOR'S OBSERVATIONS THEREON.

That on which you seize as your FIRST ARTICLE is, 'that God, by his pure and mere will, created the greatest part of the world to perdition.' Now, all this,—"the greatest part of the world unto perdition;" and "by his own pure and mere will," is a perfect fiction; and a production from the workshop of your own brain. For although God did certainly decree, from the beginning, everything which should befal the race of man; yet such a manner of speech, as the saying that the *end*, or *object*, of God's work of creation was destruction, or perdition, is nowhere to be found in my writings. Just like an unclean hog, therefore, you root up, with your foul snout, all doctrine that is of sweet odour; hoping to find in it something filthy and offensive.

In the next place, although my doctrine is, that the will of God is the *first* and *supreme cause* of all things; yet I everywhere teach, that, wheresoever, in his counsels and works, the *cause* does not plainly appear; yet that there *is* a *cause*, which lies *hidden in Himself;* and that, according to *it*, He has decreed nothing but that which is *wise*, and holy, and *just*. Therefore, with reference to the sentiments of the schoolmen, concerning the *absolute*, or *tyrannical*, will of God,—I not only repudiate, but abhor, them all; *because* they separate the *justice* of God from his *ruling power*. Now see, then, thou unclean dog, how much thou hast gained, and how far thou hast advanced thy cause, by this thy impudent barking. For myself, while I subject the whole human race to the *will* of God; I at the same time, ever affirm, that God never decrees anything but with the most *righteous reason*, which reason, (though it may at the present time be unknown, to *us*,) will assuredly be revealed to us, at the last day, in all its infinite righteousness and Divine perfection.

You thrust in my face, and impudently upbraid me with, the "pure and mere will of God;" which idea I, in a hundred or more passages of my books, utterly repudiate. Meantime, I freely acknowledge my doctrine to be this;—that Adam fell, not only by the *permission* of God, but by his very *secret counsel* and *decree;* and that Adam drew all his posterity with himself, by his fall, into eternal destruction. Both these *positions*, it seems, give you great offence, as being (according to your account) 'contrary to *nature*, and to the *Scripture*.' You attempt to prove it to be contrary to *nature*, *because* every animal naturally loves its own offspring; whence you argue, that, therefore, God, who gave such a natural affection to brute beasts, ought not, certainly, less to love all men; seeing that *they* are *his* offspring. Your argument and thought are infinitely too coarse and low, and infinitely beneath the mightiness of the *matter*, when you demand of God,

the eternal Author of nature, just what He rightfully demands of the ox and the ass, which He has created. As if God himself ought to be bound by the same laws as those which he has appointed for the creatures which He has made!—That every animal might propagate its own kind, He has implanted, in each animal, the desire of that propagation.—Go thou, then, and expostulate with God! and ask Him *how* it is, that, from all eternity, He has remained content with himself, and has retained his own native excellency, and glory, barren, as it were, and unpropagated!! God ought certainly ever to be consistent with Himself. If thou, therefore, art to be our judge in the mighty and stupendous matter, God has violated the order of nature, by choosing rather to be without all offspring, than to exercise his fruitfulness!!

Moreover as all brute beasts fight for their offspring, even unto death, how is it (according to *your* doctrine) that God permits his helpless offspring to be torn in pieces, and devoured, by tigers, and bears, and lions, and wolves? Is it because his hand is too short; so that He cannot stretch it down out of heaven for their defence! See you not how wide a field lies open to me, if I were inclined to expose and condemn all your idle and absurd reasonings! But I will content myself with dwelling on one point only; and let that suffice.—Proofs of the love of God towards the whole human race exist, innumerable: all which demonstrate the ingratitude of those who perish, or come "to perdition." This fact, however, forms no reason whatever, why God should not confine his *especial*, or *peculiar* love, to a few: whom he has, in infinite condescension, been pleased to *choose, out of the rest!*

When God was pleased to adopt unto Himself the family of Abraham; He thereby most plainly testified, that He did not embrace the whole of mankind, with an equal love! When, again, God rejected Esau, the elder, and chose Jacob, the younger brother; He gave a manifest and signal proof of his *free love;* of *that love* with which

He loves none others, than those whom He *will!* Moses declares aloud, that one certain nation was beloved of God, while all nations beside were passed by, and disregarded, as to any *peculiar* love of God for them. The prophets everywhere testify, that the Jews exceeded and surpassed all other nations, in excellency and importance; for no other *reason* than *because* God freely loved them.

Again, Christ is not addressing the whole human race, nor indeed the whole Jewish nation, but God's little chosen flock alone, when He says, and not in vain, "Fear not, little flock: for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke xii. 32.) By which Christ intimates, that none experience the favour of God unto the hope of eternal life, but those whom He has rendered acceptable and well-pleasing unto Himself by his only-begotten Son! But if you are determined to make God subject to the *laws* of *nature*, you must necessarily accuse and condemn Him of injustice; *because*, on account of the fault of one man, we are all involved in the guilt and desert of eternal death. One man sinned, and we are all dragged to punishment. And not that only: but by the pollution of one, we are all drawn into the contagion, and are born corrupt, and infected with a deadly disease.—What have you to say to this noble teacher, and judge? Will you accuse the blessed God of cruelty, because He has thus precipitated all his offspring into ruin by the fall of one man? For although Adam destroyed both himself and all his offspring; yet, the *corruption* and the *guilt* of that fall of one man, must necessarily be ascribed to the *secret counsel* and *decree* of God! For the fault of one man could have had nothing to do with us, had not our heavenly JUDGE been pleased to consign *us* to eternal destruction, *on the account!*

Now only reflect, for a moment, *how* craftily you apply those passages of the prophet Isaiah, as a covering for your error (Isa. liv. 1; and xlix. 19, 20, 21, &c.);—As it seemed beyond all belief that the Church of God, in her

Babylonish captivity, being not only bereft of her children, but also barren in her power to produce more, should, by the recovery of her strength, become even more fruitful than she was before, God, in these passages, speaks, as it were, thus to her,—'Am not I, by whose power women conceive and bring forth, able to raise up an offspring to *thee* also?' Because God speaks thus to his Church, you, under this pretext, would force Him to assume the affections of any kind of animal. And you daringly reason that, because God causes all animals to love their own offspring, *He* also loves all *his* own offspring, namely, the whole race of mankind. And suppose, for a moment, that I grant you this. It will not *therefore* at once follow that God loves his own, *in the same manner* as beasts love *their* own. And, in the next place, if God does love his own, it does not the less follow, that He has a *right* to *reject*, as a just Judge, those, to whom He had, in vain, shown his love and indulgence, throughout their whole lives, as the kindest Father!

But you are ready to reply, next,—that 'to create is a work of love, not of hatred; and that God *therefore* created in love, not in hatred.' But you perceive not, that though all men are hateful to God, in fallen Adam, yet that, in their original creation, the love of God shines, in all its brightness. That argument, therefore, which you think is so very plausible; any other person, endowed with the most moderate judgment, and with common equity, acknowledges, in a moment, to be frivolous and vain.—That which you *next add*, I do not consider it my duty so much to refute, as to cut down, at once, with the stroke of the sword. It is indeed evident, that men are born to misery. But is the *cause* of this to be imputed to my writings?—Whence arises this miserable condition of us all,—that we are subject not only to temporal evils, but to eternal death? Does it not arise from the solemn fact, that, by the fall and fault of one man, God was

pleased to cast us all under the common guilt? In this miserable ruin of the whole human race, therefore, it is not *my opinion* only that is plainly seen; but it is the *work* of God himself, that is so openly undeniably manifest!

Meantime you hesitate not to vomit forth *your* profane and abhorrent opinion, that God is worse than any wolf, who thus wills to create men to misery.—Some men, be it remembered, are born blind; some deaf; some dumb; some of monstrous deformity. Now if we are to go by your opinion as the judge in these sacred and deep matters, God is also cruel, because He afflicts his offspring with such evils as these, and that too before they have seen the light. But the day, be thou assured, will come, when thou wilt heartily wish, that thou hadst been blind, rather than thou hadst ever been so wonderfully sharp-sighted in thus penetrating into these SECRETS of the eternal God!

You accuse God of injustice; nay, you declare Him to be nothing above a monster; if He dares to decree anything concerning men, otherwise than we ourselves should determine concerning our own children. If so, how shall we account for God's creating some dull of comprehension, others of greater incapacity, others quite idiots? Do you really think that the work of God's creation, with reference to such imperfect mortals, was really according to the fables of some Jews about the Fauns and Satyrs? For they say, that God was prevented from completing the form of these latter monsters by the intervention of the Sabbath; and therefore that they fell, half made, from his hands.—No! It rather becomes us to receive a deep and humbling lesson, from such sad spectacles as these defective human beings: and not to commence a quarrel with the MAKER of heaven and earth, from the conceptions of our own brain, concerning his works; or what, in our opinion, they ought to have been.—When

any idiot happens to meet me, I am admonished to reflect upon what God might have made *me*, had he been so pleased! As many dull of comprehension, and idiots, as there are in the world,—so many spectacles does God set before *me*, in which to behold his power; not less a subject of awe, than a subject of wonder.

But as for you, you brawl against God himself, with all impiety and profanity, as 'being less merciful than a wolf;' because (according to your opinion) He has so little considered the good and happiness of his offspring! Now, before the saying of Christ,(—'that God, because He is good, acts more kindly towards his children, than men do, who are evil' (Matt. vii. 11),) can be called in, to favour your opinions and arguments, you must prove, that *all* men are *equally* the children of God! But it is evident, that all men lost, in Adam, eternal life; and that *therefore*, the adoption of God is an act of *special grace*. Whence it will follow, that all those are the rather hated of God, who are thus estranged and alienated from Him. All the testimonies of the Scripture which you cite, are mere javelins, hurled at random by the hand of a madman; as where you quote that word, "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." (Gen. i. 31.) For from this text you conclude that *man* was also "very good." And from this you next infer, that God was unjust, in creating that which was "good," to perdition.

In what sense, however, man was created upright, by nature, I have explained, in many parts of my writings. Man certainly was not better than the devil was, before the latter lost his angelic uprightness. And now, suppose I were to cede to you for a moment, that both men and apostate angels were created unto salvation; and yet, that God, having respect to their future fall, condemned both to eternal destruction;—what would you gain from this concession to help you in supporting your arguments?

God most certainly knew what would take place, both in men and in apostate angels; and He also decreed, at the same time, what He himself would do.

With reference to the doctrine of *permission;* we will speak of that, hereafter, in its place. But for the present, if you should be disposed to reply, that the *foreknowledge* of God is not the *cause* of evils; I would only ask you this one question;—If God foresaw the destruction, both of man and of the devil, *before* He created them, and did *not*, at the same time, decree their destruction; why did He not apply, betimes, an adequate remedy, which should prevent their fall, and their liability thereto?—The devil, from the very beginning of the world, alienated himself from the hope of salvation. And man, as soon as he was created, destroyed both himself and his posterity with a deadly destruction. If therefore the preservation of both was in the hand of God, how was it that (if He had not *decreed* their destruction) He permitted their ruin? Nay, why did He not furnish each with, at least, some small degree of ability to stand? To what circuitous reasonings soever, therefore, you have recourse, I shall be able to hold you fast to this principle; —that, although man was created weak and liable to fall, yet, that this weakness contained in it a great blessing; because, man's fall immediately afterwards taught him, that nothing, out of God, is either safe, or secure, or enduring. Hence, therefore, it is made evident, that all which you prate about men having been created unto Salvation, is an argument mutilated and halt, and laid down without adequate consideration. For the truth is, that when I am confessing that there was nothing in man, when created, contrary to salvation, I am thereby and therein proving, that salvation was predestinated for all men.

Let me repeat this same argument, very briefly, in other words.—What I mean is, that, *if* we argue on that perfection of nature with which Adam was gifted at his first

creation, we *may say*, that he was created unto salvation; *because*, in that perfectness of his first created state, there was found no *cause* of death. But, if we carry the question up to God's *secret predestination*, we are met by that deep abyss, which ought at once to transport us into wonder and admiration. The fact is, that had you but been gifted with the least feeling of godly reverence, you would in a moment acknowledge, that this is not a question concerning the completeness of man's original perfection, but concerning the *will* of God and the *decree* of God. The state of the sacred case is, as if the Holy Spirit had said to you, 'Nothing of excellency was wanting in any of the creatures at their creation; but rather, all occasion was taken away from you, and from all like you, of contending against God!' For how loudly soever you and yours may deny, that there was any 'good,' in man being so created and conditioned, as that he should, by his immediate fall, destroy himself and the whole world; yet God himself declares, that such a condition of things pleased HIM! Therefore, it was most just and righteous!

And that you may the more correctly understand Moses; he does not (remember!) declare, how upright and perfect man was; but that he might stop the barkings of all dogs, like yourself, he teaches that the whole order of the creation was so tempered of God, that nothing more just or more perfect can be imagined. Wherefore, when Moses comes to speak of all the several works of God *collectively*, he says that "God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." (Gen. i. 31.) But Moses affirms no such thing concerning man, individually, specially, and absolutely, in every sense.—Having narrated *man's* creation also; the sacred historian concludes by saying, in words which apply generally to the whole creation, that all the things which God had made were "very good:" in which words, are doubtlessly to be comprehended, as in harmony with them, the words

of Solomon also, where he affirms, that the wicked were created, "for the day of evil."—"The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." (Prov. xvi. 4.)

Take then, the sum of the whole matter, to be this;—though man, at his first creation, was, in his newly created nature, "good;" yet this rectitude, which was weak, frail, and liable to fall, militates not against, nor stands in contrariety with, the PREDESTINATION OF GOD! by which predestination it was, that man perished by his sin and fault; though his nature was, by creation, pure. Nay, looking at, and arguing from, his primitive natural excellency, man was created in *this* view and sense, to salvation. And yet, from this very line of argument, *you* vainly, absurdly, and preposterously infer, that man was created "good" *that* he *might* perish, though "good," or, *as* a good man. Whereas, it is openly and undeniably manifest, that he perished by his infirmity and sin; and therefore, that he perished as one *liable* to righteous condemnation and destruction. And *how* these two propositions and positions agree and harmonize with each other, we will show hereafter; as we have indeed shown, again and again, before.

Here you throw in the common objection 'that God has no pleasure in the death of a sinner;' as declared by the prophet Ezekiel (Ezek. xxxiii. 11). But listen, I pray you, to that which, in the prophet, immediately follows, '*because* God *inviteth* all men to repentance.' (Ezek. xviii. 30, 31, 32.) To *all such*, therefore, as return into the way of life, pardon is freely offered.—But the next and principal thing to be considered herein is, whether or not that conversion or 'returning' which God requires (ver 30) is in the power of man's *freewill;* or whether it be a peculiar and sovereign gift of God! In as much, therefore, as all men are *invited* and exhorted by God to repentance, the prophet, on that ground, justly declareth, that God "hath no pleasure in the death of a

sinner." But WHY it is, that God doth not *turn* or *convert* ALL men to himself, equally, and alike; is a question, the reply to which lies hidden in himself! And as to your usual way of citing that passage of the apostle Paul, 'That God would have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth' (1 Tim. ii. 4); how vain a prop that is to put under your error to support it, I think I have shown, with sufficient plainness, already; and that repeatedly. For it is (so to speak) more certain than certainty itself, that the apostle is not, in that passage, speaking of individuals at all; but of *orders* of men, in their various civil and national *vocations*. He had just before commanded, that the public prayers of the Church should be offered up, for kings, and others in authority, and for all who held magisterial offices, of what kind and degree soever they may be. But as nearly all those who were then armed with the sword of public justice, were open and professed enemies to the Church; and as it might therefore *seem* to the Church singular, or absurd that public prayers should be offered up for *them;* the Apostle meets all objections, so very natural, by admonishing the Church to pray even *for them* also; and to supplicate God, to extend his grace and favour even *to them*, for the Church's quiet, peace, and safety.

There is, perhaps, a stronger colour in some of the words of *Peter*, which might have better suited your purposes; where he says that God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Pet. iii. 9.) And if there be anything in the first member of the passage, that seems difficult of comprehension, at first sight, it is made perfectly plain by the explanation which follows. For, in as far as God 'willeth that all should come unto repentance;' in so far, He willeth that no one should perish: but, in order that they *may* thus be received of God, they must "come." But the Scripture everywhere affirms, that in order that they *may* "come" they must be *prevented* of God; that is,

God must come, *first*, to *them*, to draw them: for until they are drawn of God, they will remain where they are; given up to the obstinacy of the flesh.—Now if there were one single particle of right judgment in you, you would, in a moment, acknowledge, that there is a wide and wonderful difference between these two things;—that the hearts of men are made of God 'fleshly,' out of 'stony,' hearts; and that it is *thus*, that they are made to be displeased and dissatisfied with themselves, and are brought, as suppliants, to beg of God mercy and pardon; and that, *after* they are thus changed, they are received into all grace.

Now God declares, that both these things are of his pure goodness and mercy;—that He gives us hearts, that we *may* repent, and then pardons us, graciously, *upon* our repentance and supplication. For if God were not ready to receive us, when we do truly implore his mercy, He would not say, "Turn ye unto me, and I will turn unto you." (Zech. i. 3.) But if repentance were in the power of the free-will of man, Paul would not say, "If peradventure God will *give them* repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." (2 Tim. ii. 26.) Nay, if God himself, who exhorts all men to repentance, by his voice,—if God himself, I repeat, who thus exhorts, did not draw his elect by the secret operation of his Spirit, Jeremiah would not thus describe those who *do* return: "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely *after* that I was turned, I repented." (Jer. xxxi. 19.)—This solution of the matter (I repeat), if there were any shame or modesty in so impudent a dog as thyself, ought to have been known to thee, as existing, in my writings, in a hundred different places. And although thou mayest take it upon thyself to reject such a solution; it nevertheless stands supported and confirmed both by the apostle Paul, and by the prophet Ezekiel.

But *how*, and in what *sense* it is, that God willeth all men to be saved is a matter not here to be inquisitively

discussed. One thing is certain,—that these two things—salvation, and the knowledge of the truth, are *always, inseparably joined together.*—Now then, answer me;—If God had willed that his truth should be known unto *all men,* how is it that, from the first preaching of the Gospel until now, so many nations exist, unto whom his pure truth has never been sent by Him at all? and unto whom, therefore, it has never come?—And again, if such had been the will of God concerning all men, how is it that He never opened the eyes of all? For the internal illumination of the Spirit, with which God has condescended to bless so few, is indispensably necessary unto faith. And there is also another knot for thee to untie.—Since no one, but he who is drawn by the secret influence of the Spirit, can approach unto God, *how* is it that God does not draw *all* men, indiscriminately, to himself, if He really "willeth *all* men to be saved" (in the common meaning of that expression)?

It is therefore an evident conclusion, flowing from this *discrimination* which God makes, that there is, with him, a *secret reason* why He shuts so many out from salvation. *How* it is, therefore, that the mercy of God is shown unto the thousandth generation, thou wilt never (as long as the pride by which thou art inflated shall blind and blunt thy faculties), acknowledge. For no such mercy is promised as that which shall utterly abolish the curse under which the *whole race* of Adam lieth; but *such* a mercy *is* promised as shall (where all naturally existing obstacles are removed) break forth, and endure for ever, upon the most unworthy.

In this manner it was, that God passed by many of the children of Abraham, when He chose the one of them, Isaac. So also, when the twin sons of Isaac were born; the same God willed that his mercy should rest on *one* of them, only; namely, on Jacob. And again, although God shows forth proofs of his wrath in many; it nevertheless remaineth eternally true, that He is "abundant in

goodness," and "slow to anger:" and hence, in that very longsuffering with which He endures the reprobate, there shineth forth no dim refulgence of his great goodness. —Only observe, therefore, in what an effectual manner, thy frivolous and captious objections, from which I can disengage myself in a moment, entangle, ensnare, and imprison thyself!

In order to make the mercy of God greater than his anger, *you* will have *more* to be chosen to salvation than to destruction. And suppose I should for a moment cede this to you, what greater glory will thereby be secured to God? None whatever. God will nevertheless be as unjust as ever, to those few who are lost (*if your* calumnies are to be received and believed). Unless God love all his created *offspring* alike, you will still profanely and awfully pronounce Him to be less kind and merciful than a wolf! Nay, let there be but *one only* against whom God shall righteously exercise his wrath, how shall He escape or avoid the accusation of cruelty, in your blind and unholy judgment! Farther still;—you will not even allow, as exceptions from the impious and profane charges of cruelty in God, that there are gross provocations of his Divine wrath in the men themselves? But, comparing alone wrath with mercy, you merely contend for the *magnitude* of the one or the other. Just as if God, by choosing more to salvation than to destruction would thereby, and thereby alone, prove himself to be a *merciful* God!—God, however, commends the greatness of his grace to us, in a manner far different from this. He not only pardons so many, and such various sins, in his elect; but even contends with, and bears with, the obstinate malice of the reprobate; until it has filled up the measure of its iniquity. (Matt. xxiii. 32.)

ARTICLE II.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY II!]

GOD NOT ONLY PREDESTINATED EVEN ADAM TO DAMNATION BUT TO THE CAUSES OF THAT DAMNATION ALSO: WHOSE FALL HE NOT ONLY FORESAW, BUT HE ALSO WILLED BY HIS SECRET AND ETERNAL DECREE AND ORDAINED THAT HE SHOULD FALL: WHICH FALL, THAT IT MIGHT, IN ITS TIME, TAKE PLACE, GOD PLACED BEFORE HIM THE APPLE, WHICH SHOULD CAUSE THAT FALL.

CALUMNIATOR'S

OBSERVATIONS AND STATEMENTS ON

ARTICLE II.

YOUR opponents say, that this SECOND ARTICLE, is the doctrine of the devil; and they demand of me, Calvin, that I would tell them where, in the Divine Scriptures, the substance contained in this Article, is written?

REPLY

OF JOHN CALVIN TO

ARTICLE II.,

&c., &c., &c.

UNDER this SECOND ARTICLE, you appear again exactly the same man as before. Now just produce the passage,

from my writings, wherein I teach, 'that the apple was placed by God before Adam that it *might* be the cause of his fall'! This in fact is the very source of all your popularity;—the drawing a cloud of obscuration across the minds of the inexperienced; to prevent them from rising to the height of that truth which is removed out of the reach of the common understanding of the flesh, and of the carnal mind.

But not to wrangle about words, I willingly, and in a moment confess, that what I *have* written, is this,—'That the fall of Adam was not by accident, nor by chance; but *ordained* by the *secret counsel* of God.' And this is the doctrine which you positively pronounce to be "the doctrine of the devil." You are, in your own eyes, I know, a judge of the highest authority: and therefore it is that, in your self-conceit, you imagine that you can, by five words of the foulest abuse, knock down that firm fabric of truth which I have erected, and which I have supported by the most impregnable arguments. You call upon me to produce a testimony from the Scriptures, from which it is manifest, that Adam fell not, *but by* the secret decree of God. But had you read even a few pages of my writings, with any attention, that sentiment of mine could not have escaped you, which everywhere occurs in my books;—That God governs all things by his *secret counsel* and *decree*.—You ascribe a *pre*-science to God after your own fashion; representing Him, as sitting in heaven, as an idle, inactive, unconcerned spectator of all things, in the life of men. Whereas, God himself, ever vindicating to himself the right and the act of holding the helm of all things which are done in the whole world, never permits a separation of his *prescience* from his *power!* Nor is this manner of reasoning *mine* only, but, most certainly, Augustine's also. "If (says that holy father) God *foresaw* that, which He did not *will* to be done; God holds not the supreme rule over all things. God, therefore, *ordained* that which should come to pass:

because, nothing could have been done, had He not *willed* it to be done."

If you judge this to be absurd, you will be just as far off as before; and will fall back into the same confusion, into which you fell by making my doctrine to be "the doctrine of the devil." For you ought to have applied that remedy for your evil case, which might have been ready at your hand. But that you did *not* this, nor could do it, is perfectly plain. You *might* have thought thus,—'God foresaw the fall of Adam. It was in his power to have prevented it if He would. But He did *not will* to do so. *Why* did He not will to do so? No other reason can be assigned for his *not willing* to do so, than that his WILL had quite another bent, or inclination.'—But, if you *will* permit yourself to enter into a contention with God, you had better profanely accuse Him, at once, and condemn Him, for having so made man of constitutional frailty as to leave him *liable* to fall, and that into *eternal ruin*, on the account! But you will reply, that Adam fell by his own *free-will*. My reply to you, in return, is, that Adam had need of being gifted with that fortitude and constancy with which the elect of God are gifted whom God *wills* to "keep" sound and safe "*from* falling." (Jude 24.)

Most certain it is, that if fresh strength were not supplied to us from heaven, every moment, such is our liability to fall, that we should perish a thousand times over. But God supplies all those, whom He hath chosen, with an invincible fortitude; by which they are so holden up as to "persevere unto the end." How was it then (I again ask) that God did not bestow this same fortitude and perseverance, on Adam, *if* He had *willed* that he should stand fast, and in safety? Here, most assuredly, every mouth must be silent and dumb: or, all must confess, with Solomon, that "God hath made all things for himself; yea even the wicked for the day of evil." (Prov. xvi. 4.) If this offend you as being an absurdity, think within yourself whether the Scriptures declare so often, in

vain, that the judgments of God are "a great deep." If it were possible for us to measure the incomprehensible counsel of God, by the standard of our own human capacity, Moses would have said in vain, "*Secret* things belong unto the *Lord our God:* but those things which are *revealed* belong unto *us* and to our *children*, for ever." (Deut. xxix. 29.)

You demand of me to cite the place in the Holy Scriptures, by which I prove that God did not prevent the fall of Adam, *because* his *will* was *not* to prevent it. Just as if that memorable reply of God to all such inquiries, and inquirers, did not contain in itself an all-sufficient proof,—"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." From which, the apostle Paul at once concludes, and justly so, that God hath not mercy upon all, *because* He *wills not* to have mercy upon all! And most certainly these words, without the aid of any interpreter, plainly and loudly declare, that God is not bound by any law, that should *compel* Him to show mercy unto *all men* indiscriminately, and alike: but that He is the lord of his own *will*, to impart pardon to whom He *will* and to pass by others, as He *will*. It is moreover certain, that God was the same then as now, when the prophet said of Him, "He doeth according to his will." (Dan. iv. 35.) If therefore God permitted the fall of Adam *against* his will (as you would have it), you will next say, that He was overcome by Satan, in the conflict; and thus you will make like the Manichees *two* ruling principles. But Paul pleading also this great cause of God, compares Him (and that soberly and solemnly), to a potter, who could, of his own will form, of the same mass, vessels of different kinds, as he pleased. Now the apostle might have *begun* his argument, had he been so led, *from sin*. But he does not so. He commences the mighty subject by defending the FREE RIGHT of God from the very beginning of his glorious workmanship:—even from his *secret*, *eternal*, and *sovereign* WILL! And where he afterwards adds, 'That all were

concluded under unbelief;' does he teach that this took place *contrary to*, or *without*, the will of God? Does he not, on the contrary, teach, that God was the author of that state of unbelief? If you reply that all were condemned to unbelief as they *deserved:* the context will not admit even *that* interpretation; because Paul is there speaking of the *secret judgments* of God. And that solemn exclamation of his, directly militates against such an interpretation—"O the depth," &c.! Wherefore as God, from the beginning, *predestinated* Christ to succour those who were lost; so, by his inconceivable and inestimable COUNSEL, He *decreed* a way, by which He might manifest forth his glory, by the fall of Adam.

I willingly confess, that where God is vindicating the free course of his mercy, He speaks of the whole human race, *generally*, which had already perished in Adam, but this same view and consideration held good, before Adam fell,—that his *will* was then all-sufficient to show mercy, *when* and *as* He pleased. Moreover, this his eternal will, though it depends on none, and on nothing, but HIMSELF, nor has any *prior cause* to influence it, is nevertheless founded in the highest reason, and in the highest equity. For though, in the case of men, *they* require a law to rein and restrain their intemperateness; it is far otherwise with GOD.—He is his own law:—a law unto himself! And his WILL is the highest rule of the highest equity.

ARTICLE III.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY III.!]

THE SINS WHICH ARE COMMITTED, ARE COMMITTED NOT ONLY BY THE PERMISSION, BUT EVEN BY THE WILL, OF GOD. FOR IT IS FRIVOLOUS TO MAKE ANY DIFFER-

ENCE BETWEEN THE PERMISSION OF GOD, AND THE WILL OF GOD: AS FAR AS SIN IS CONCERNED. THEY WHO ATTEMPT TO MAKE THIS DIFFERENCE, MERELY ATTEMPT TO GAIN GOD OVER BY FLATTERY.

CALUMNIATOR'S

OBSERVATIONS AND STATEMENTS ON

ARTICLE III.

CONCERNING the difference between the *will* and the *permission* of God the arguments of your opponents are these;—Calvin (they say) professes that he is a prophet of God: but we say, that Calvin is a prophet of the devil. Now one of these assertions must be false. Both parties cannot speak the truth. If Calvin is a prophet of God, *we* lie: but if Calvin is a prophet of the devil, then *he* lies; for he asserts that he is a prophet of God. But suppose (*by the will of God!*) that both positions are true. That is, if God *wills* that *Calvin should say* that he is a prophet of God, while *we* say that Calvin is a prophet of the devil; it follows, that *contradiction*, is a *will:* which is impossible. For if God wills that which is false, He does not *will* that which is *true*. And again, if God wills that which is *true*, He does not will that which is *false*. From which it will follow, that if God wills that the one party should speak the truth; it must be contrary to his will, that the other party should lie. But the one party certainly does lie. Therefore the one party lies by the *permission*, but not by the *will*, of God. Hence, the next *consequence* is, that there is a difference even in God himself; for there is a discrepancy between his *permission* and his *will*.

Your adversaries adduce, moreover, many conspicuous examples of this discrepancy between the *will* of God and

his *permission:* especially from Ezekiel xx.: where God, after He had reproved his people, very fully and severely, for not obeying his commandments; at last concludes with these words, "Go ye; serve ye every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me." (Ezek. xx. 39.) As if God had said, 'I permit you to serve your own lusts, since ye will not obey my precepts.' And this, indeed, seems to be exactly the same as that which He had said in the former part of the same chapter: "Because they despise my statutes, therefore I gave them also statutes that were not good." (Ver. 24, 25.) Now God did not, in reality, we are assured, give unto the Israelites statutes that were not, in themselves, good; for all the statutes of God are good. But because they despised the good precepts of God, He forsook them: and they being thus forsaken of God, fell away into evil statutes: just as that prodigal son, being forsaken by his father, or rather having forsaken his father, fell into luxury and every evil. Thus also Paul teaches, that because men did not love the truth, God sent upon them strong delusions, that they might believe a lie.—Of the same description also seems to be that passage of Amos iv., "Go ye to Bethel, and transgress, for this liketh you." (Vers. 4 and 5.) So it is also, in the present day; (as in the case of thyself and thy disciples.) As men would not obey God, who saith that He hateth sin; therefore God hath permitted spirits of delusion such as yours to exist, who teach that God willeth sin, that they who would not obey the truth, might be left to obey a lie.

Your opponents adduce that passage from Zechariah; where God says, He was angry with the nations that were at ease; because, when He was lightly angry with the Israelites, they helped forward the calamity. That is, they afflicted the Israelites more grievously than the anger of the Lord against them required, or could endure. This was therefore done by the *permission*, not by the *will*, of God. They produce also a similar example from

the prophet Obed; who reproves the people of Israel, because they oppressed the people of Judah more heavily than the anger of the Lord required. They bring forward also the example of the prodigal son; concerning whom, if thou sayest that he ran into riotous living *by the will* of his father, it will be the greatest possible absurdity. The son therefore thus acted, by the *permission* of the father. In the same way also thy opponents affirm, that the wicked are prodigal sons of God; and that they sin, not by the *will*, but by the *permission* of God. They refer, moreover, to that saying of Christ, "And ye; will ye also go away?"

Christ most certainly did not *will* that they *should* go away; but He *permitted* them so to do. They argue, finally, from the nature of common sense: which dictates, that there must be a difference between *willing* and *permitting*. And they affirm, that it was according to common sense, that Christ taught Divine things; and that if thou take away common sense from his teaching all his Parables must fall at once: for it is by *common sense* that those Parables are to be judged of, and understood.

REPLY

OF JOHN CALVIN TO

ARTICLE III.,

AND TO CALUMNIATOR'S STATEMENTS,

&c., &c.

This THIRD ARTICLE shows, equally with the preceding, how greedily and to what extent, you feed on calumnies. If you *did* wish thus fiercely to gnaw my doctrine; why did you not, at least, cite my words *honestly?* In the vast

cause now before us, I affirm, that to make a difference between the *permission* and the *will* of God, is, indeed, "frivolous." But you interpose a witty and clever argument, as you imagine; though it is an empty sophism. If all things are done by the will of God, God (you assert) wills things which are contrary in nature and in principle: which is proved (you maintain) by saying, that I *really am* a prophet of the devil, while I affirm that I am a true servant of God. This *appearance* of contradiction is that which dazzles and blinds your eyes. But God himself who well knoweth, in himself, *how* it is that He *willeth* that same thing in one sense, which is *contrary* to his will in another, pays no regard whatever to your dulness of understanding and stupidity. As often as God called forth the true prophets, He most certainly *willed* that they should contend zealously and earnestly in declaring the doctrine of the law. Upon this there secretly rose up false prophets, who strove to overthrow that doctrine. That there should be a conflict, therefore, between the true and the false prophets, was inevitable. But God did not therefore contend with, or contradict, himself: though He willed that both these true and these false prophets should come forth. You obtrude upon me the long-suffering of God. But God, on the other hand, declares, that no false prophets arise, but those whom He *ordains* to be such; either to prove the faith of his own people, or to blind the unbelieving. "If there arise among you a false prophet (saith Moses) your God proveth you by that prophet." (Deut. xii. 1 and 3.) Now you, by a most perverse and preposterous comment, transfer to some other, that which Moses ascribes expressly to God. Therefore, either deny, at once, that God searches the hearts of his people; or else, admit that which is the evident and indubitable truth;—that false prophets are instruments of God, by which He proves, as by a touchstone, that, of which He will have himself acknowledged to be the author. But Ezekiel sets this forth still more

clearly and remarkably, "And if the prophet be deceived, when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet; and I will stretch out my hand upon him and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel." (Ezek. xiv. 9.)

You would have us to rest content with the *permission* of God only. But God, by his prophet asserts, that his *will* and his *hand* are in the whole matter, as the moving *cause*. Now just consider, then, which of the two is the more worthy to be believed;—God, who by his Spirit, the only fountain of truth, thus speaks concerning himself; or you, prating about his hidden and unsearchable mysteries, out of the worthless knowledge of your own carnal brain! What! when God calls in Satan for his purposes, as the instrument of his vengeance, and openly gives him commandment to go and deceive the prophets of Ahab;—does this positive *command* differ nothing from a mere *permission?* The voice of God contains in it no ambiguity whatever. 'Who (saith God) will go and deceive Ahab for me?' Nor does God command Satan, in any obscure manner. "Go thou and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets." (1 Kings xxii.) Now I wish to know from you whether the *doing* a thing, is the same as the *permitting* it to be done? When David had secretly abused the wife of another man, God declares that He will cause all David's wives to be dragged forth, to make an example of the same disgraceful sin, openly, in the sight of the sun. God does not say, 'I will *permit it to be done*,' but 'I will *do it!*' But you, in your wondrous defence of God (as you think) would aid Him by your fallacious help, in thrusting forward your imaginary *permission!* How very differently does David think and act? He, while revolving in his mind, the fearful judgment of God, exclaims, "I was dumb; because *thou* didst it!" In like manner, Job blesses God, and confesses that he was plundered by the robbers, not only through the *permission*, but by the *will* and *act*

of God; for he plainly affirms, 'that it was the LORD who gave, and that it was the LORD who took away,' what He had himself given. If, upon your authority, *giving* and *receiving* are to be understood, in the same way as *willing* and *permitting;* riches, so considered, are not blessings actually *bestowed* of God; but they fall into our hands at random, by the *permission* of God! But if you and your foul band should continue thus to cry out against God until dooms-day; He will nevertheless, in due time, fully justify and vindicate himself. But as for us, we will adore, with all reverence those mysteries, which so far surpass our comprehension; until the brightness of their full knowledge shall shine forth upon us, in that day, when He, who is now seen "through a glass darkly," shall be seen by us "face to face."—"Then (saith Augustine) shall He be seen, in the brightest light of understanding, that which the godly now hold fast, in faith;—how sure, certain, immutable, and all-efficacious, is the will of God! —How many things he *can do*, which He yet *wills not*, to be done!—but, that He *wills* nothing, which He *cannot* do."

With reference, however, to the present ARTICLE, I will answer you from the mouth of the same godly writer. "These (saith he) are the mighty works of the Lord: exquisitely perfect according to every bent of his will. And so perfect, in exquisite wisdom; that, when both the angelic, and the human natures had sinned; that is, had done, not what God willed, but what each nature willed, even by a *like will*, in each creature; it came to pass, that what God, as the Creator, *willed not*, He himself accomplished, *according* as He had *willed;* thus *blessedly* using, as the God of perfect goodness, even *evils*, to the damnation of those whom He had righteously predestinated unto punishment; and to the salvation of those, whom He had mercifully predestinated unto grace. For, as far as these transgressing natures were themselves concerned; *they* did that which God *willed*

not; but with respect to the *Omnipotence* of God, they could by no means have done what they did, without it, nor without its concernment therein. For by the very act of their doing that, which was *contrary* to the will of God, they were themselves thereby *fulfilling* the will of God! Wherefore, these mighty works of God exquisitely perfect, according to every bent of his will, are such, that, in a wonderful and ineffable way, *that* is not done *without* the will of God, which is even done *contrary* to his will. Because, it could not be done at all, unless He permitted it to be done: and yet, He does not permit *unwillingly*, but *willingly*. Nor, as the God of *Goodness*, would He permit a thing to be done evilly, unless, as the God of *Omnipotence*, He could work good, even out of the evil done."

As to the testimonies of the Scripture which you adduce, they have no more to do with the present mighty question and cause, than oil has to do with wine, to make a mixture; or to dilute the one with the other. God, speaking to the Jews by the prophet Ezekiel, and addressing them as disobedient, says, "Go ye; worship every man his own idols." This, I openly profess, is not the voice of God *commanding* or *exhorting*, but of God *rejecting* an impious mixture of worship; a worship, by which the Jews had profaned his sanctuary. Now what else can you conclude, from this passage, but that God sometimes permits that to be, which He disapproves and condemns? As if it were not evident to all, that God sometimes commands, and sometimes permits, by the same forms of expression! God says in the Law, "Six days shalt thou labour." Here is a permission. For sanctifying every *seventh* day to himself, He leaves the other *six* free to men. In a manner somewhat different also, He permitted of old, divorce, to the Jews; which He nevertheless by no means approved. In the present case, recorded by the prophet Ezekiel, he gives up the double-minded and the perfidious to idols; because

He will not suffer his name to be polluted. But how is it that you have forgotten, here, that all this is wrought by the "SECRET PROVIDENCE OF GOD!" by which He ordains, and turns, to the accomplishment of his own purposes, all the movements and tumults of the world, according to his own will! Moreover, corrupting, vainly and ignorantly as you do, that other passage (Ezekiel xx. 24, 25,) you evince how every thing sacred is disregarded by an impure and profane person like yourself. The words of God are, "Because they despised my statutes, I gave them precepts that were not good." Here you trifle by observing, that when they were forsaken of God, they fell into idolatry. But God undoubtedly means, that the Jews were given over to the Chaldæans, into slavery; and that the Chaldæans, who were idolaters, were oppressing them by their tyrannical laws.

But our *question* now is, whether God merely *permitted* the Jews to be thus dragged into exile by the Chaldæans, or whether He used the latter as rods, chosen by Himself wherewith to scourge the Jews for their sins. For if you will still make the doctrine of *mere permission* a pretext, you might as well commit all the prophets to the flames, at once: who, at one time, declare, that Satan was *sent by God to deceive*, and, at another, that the Chaldæans or Assyrians were *sent* by God to destroy: and who, at the same time assert, that God 'hissed for' the Ægyptians that He might use their might, in punishing his people; and, at another, that the Assyrians were his hired soldiers;—that Nebuchadnezzar was his servant, in plundering Egypt; and that the Assyrians were the "axe" in his hand, and the "rods" of his anger, in utterly devastating Judæa. I do not multiply, as I might do, kindred examples, lest I should exceed all moderate bounds of proof. (Is. x. 5.)

Nor is your inebriated audacity the less manifest, where you would vainly make it appear, that God's *sending* "strong delusions" on the unbelieving, that they might

believe a lie, means, that He *permits* false teachers to exist; and that, as he He permitted the prodigal son to fall into riotous living, when he had deserted his father, so He permits his prodigals to fall into error and delusion when they forsake Him. And when you spout forth all this folly, you imagine that your readers are so blind, that they do not see things to be quite otherwise in the words of Paul, where he says, "God *shall send* upon them strong delusions, that they might believe a lie." (2 Thess. ii. 11.) But it is no marvel whatever, that *he* should prate thus, at will, and at random, who imagines, that there are no judgments of God at all; or, who does not know what the *judgment* means; or holds it in perfect contempt, if he does? For no man, who is not insane, would say, that a judge had no hand in the judgment of the wicked; or that he would sit down in unconcern and leave others to perform that duty, which belonged, properly, to himself alone.

You attempt, however, by your barking, either to frighten me, or to provoke me; when you say, that by the *permission* of God spirits of error and delusion exist, who teach, that God *wills* sin. But as this same reproach was cast in the teeth of the apostle Paul himself, why should I grieve or complain, at being a partaker of the same reproach with him? You adduce a passage from the prophet Zechariah, where the nations are described as punishing God's people beyond the extent which his wrath required. Are you then really such a simpleton; as not to believe, that there was protection enough in God to prevent this excess of his people's affliction by their enemies, and to have made their punishment less, had He been pleased, or had he *willed*, so to do? You reply, that the words of the prophet intimate this excess of punishment. But you must be twice or thrice dipped in stupidity, if you perceive not that God tries the patience of his people, in a marvellous manner, by the severest proofs; sometimes in one way, and sometimes in another;

and that He is often, at the same time offended by the insolence of their enemies; where He sees them become too much elated with their victories, and when they insult and cruelly use the conquered. Nay, your foolish comments and reasonings fall to the ground, of their own accord; directly militating against, and mutually destroying each other. For the truth and fact must be, either that God *positively commanded* those profane nations, or He *merely permitted* them, to gently chastise his people. If you reply that He *commanded* them to do so; I then obtain the conclusion that, though these neighbouring enemies were, without cause, afflictive to the miserable exiles who dwelt with them; yet, that they would have been without blame if they had not exceeded due bounds in their cruel treatment of them as the conquered, and as captives. For who would attribute that to them, as iniquity, which they had done at God's command?

But you are labouring all the time to establish a difference between the *permission* of God and his *command.* Thus making it appear, that though God *commanded* their enemies to inflict punishment on his people; yet it was by his *permission only*, that they exceeded all due bounds in the punishment they inflicted. In this same way of reasoning, the Israelites also were deserving of censure: for they also afflicted their brethren of Juda more severely than the wrath of God against them (according to your reasoning) required. But your insanity blinds you so far, as to cause you to assert, that they would have been free from all guilt and blame, if they had been moderate in their vexation of their brethren. For I have to bring you back again and again to this point;—that the Israelites sinned, not only because, (by the *permission* of God as thou imaginest) they exercised too great severity towards their brethren; but because they took up arms against them, at all. You, however, hesitate not to declare, that there was no sin in their commencing war against their brethren; because God was angry with

the people of Judah, and himself armed the Israelites, that they might execute his vengeance upon them, at his own command.—Whereas I maintain that the Israelites sinned in a twofold sense ;—*first*, because they had themselves no *intent* or *desire* to *do the will of God*, although they were, really, the instruments of his vengeance ;—and *secondly*, because their atrocity itself proves, that they were destitute of all sense of equity. Nay, at the very outset you betray your shameless ignorance, in your pretending, that men, as far as they are themselves concerned, err and fall, by the *permission* of God. Whereas, such a representation of the sacred matter is impious and profane. It is making God to give *permission* to men to do evil, in reference to their *own actions ;* as considered *in themselves.* While the reality and truth are, that God severely prohibits, and solemnly forbids, the doing of anything that is contrary to his commands. But *why* God of his *will*, permits men to do wrong ; nay, *why* God by his secret decree gives men over to evil, whom He nevertheless commands to continue in the right way ; it becomes our sobriety and modesty of mind, to remain willingly ignorant. To search into this profound secret insolently as you do, is rashness, audacity, and madness !

How cleverly and appropriately you interpret that passage where Christ (as you make it appear) permits his disciples to go away, (John vi. 67) learn from the following reality of the case.—When Christ, referring to those who *had* gone away, turns to his disciples, and says to them, "Will *ye* also go away ?" He is positively exhorting them to persevere and continue with Him. For, asking them, in grief, whether they also would go away, He puts, as it were, a gentle rein upon them to prevent them *from* falling away with apostates. And is this, I pray you, the manner in which you convert all such forms of speech as these into *permissions ?* Common sense does, I acknowledge, at first sight, take *to command*, to be one thing, and *to permit*, to be another. But the fact is, that this

difference, or this sameness, is not the real *question* at issue. The *question* between us, is, whether God, in unconcern and inactivity, merely observes, as an uninterested, unconcerned, and idle spectator, all the things that are done upon earth; or whether, from his all high throne, He rules, overrules, and governs, by his Divine command, every single action of the sons of men!—Or, if the term *permission* gives you so much satisfaction and pleasure;—answer me this question;—Does God *permit* things to be done, *willingly*, or *unwillingly?* That God permits *unwillingly*, is positively denied by Psalm cxv. 3. "The Lord hath done whatsoever He *willed* (or, whatsoever He hath pleased.") If therefore God permits *willingly;* to represent Him as sitting on his throne as a mere unconcerned and unengaged spectator, is utterly profane. Wherefore it follows, that God determines and rules, by his counsel, whatsoever He *wills* to be done. But you are for bringing, with child's talk, this sublime mystery of God down to the rule and measure of common sense!

And as to your objecting and arguing, on the other hand, that Christ so taught all the divine lessons of his teaching, as to accommodate himself to the capacity of people of *common sense;*—Christ himself flatly denies this; and convicts you, at once, both of lying, and of impudence, in the matter. Hear you not Christ himself declaring, that he spoke in "*parables*"*?* to the very end, that the common people, or people in general, "might *hear*, and yet *not understand*"*?* It is indeed quite true that the Holy Spirit does, for our sakes, everywhere speak, in a certain manner, as a nurse would speak to children: but this is a widely different matter from representing, as you do, that *common sense* is a capable and competent judge of those profound doctrines; which exceed, in their incomprehensibility, the capacity of angels.—Paul proclaims aloud that "the natural man *receiveth not* the things of the Spirit of God, neither *can* he know them." (1 Cor. ii. 14.) He therefore ad-

monishes all those to become fools, and to resign all their own wisdom, who would profit in the heavenly school. In a word, God everywhere vindicates to himself, as *his own*, all true light of understanding. Indeed both days and volumes would fail me, if I were to attempt the accumulation of those testimonies of Scripture which condemn common sense as perfect darkness; for they are numberless; and they all declare, that light can be obtained from heaven alone; and that whosoever would be wise in the things of God, and of his own salvation, must renounce all his own wisdom, how much human light soever it may contain.—I will content myself therefore with one example only.—God *willed not* that the doctrine of the Gospel should be preached unto the Gentiles; and He withheld it from them even until the coming of Christ. And therefore it is, that the apostle calls the Gospel "the mystery that was hidden from ages:" nay, that was unknown to the angels themselves in heaven. (Col. i. 26; and 1 Pet. i. 12.)

Notwithstanding such testimonies as these, however, you *will* persist in thrusting upon us the sufficiency of *common sense;* which, by its own natural will and judgment, subverts this very doctrine of the apostle altogether. For you will grant nothing to be even probable, but that of which common sense may be the estimator, arbiter, and judge. Whereas the prophet, when speaking of the SECRET PROVIDENCE OF GOD! exclaims, "O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep." (Psalm xcii. 5.) But you, on the contrary, deny that anything is *divine* but that which you can measure by the rule of your own reason. What becomes then of the remonstrance of the apostle, when he is discussing the mighty question now before us? Why doth he make the appeal, "Nay, but who art thou, O man"? And again, what meaneth his wonder and admiration, "O the depth!" "How unsearchable," &c., &c.? The apostle commands

us to wonder and be astonished. Because, whenever we come to the incomprehensible counsel of God, all mortal senses and powers fail before it. Whilst you all the time, will admit nothing that you cannot see with your own natural eyes!

ARTICLE IV.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY IV.!]

"ALL THE CRIMES THAT ARE COMMITTED BY ANY MAN WHATSOEVER, ARE, BY THE OPERATION OF GOD, GOOD AND JUST."

CALUMNIATOR'S

OBSERVATIONS AND STATEMENTS ON

ARTICLE IV.

AGAINST this FOURTH ARTICLE all your opponents utter aloud that passage of Isaiah v. 20; "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil." Now if sin is a good and righteous work of God; it follows, that righteousness is an evil and unrighteous work of God; for, righteousness is altogether contrary to sin. Again, if sin is righteous; it follows, that unrighteousness is righteous; for sin is unrighteousness. Farther, if sin is a work of God, it must follow (your opponents argue) that God doeth that which is sinful.

REPLY

OF JOHN CALVIN TO

ARTICLE IV.

AND TO CALUMNIATOR'S OBSERVATIONS, STATEMENTS, &c., &c.

In the case of this Fourth Article also, you go on grossly lying, as before: of which fact, I would at the outset cautiously warn my readers; and for this reason; —that they may form their judgments from the reality of the case, rather than from your foul calumnies. Nor do I so much condemn your objections, in themselves, as indignantly complain, that by altering and perverting my words, you malignantly wrest what I did say, for the purpose of fanning the flame of hatred against my doctrine: which doctrine is far different from your false representations of it.—You enter into a quarrel with me, as if I had said, 'that sin was a just, or righteous, work of God.' Which doctrine, and the idea of it, I hold, throughout my writings, in the utmost detestation. Wherefore, the greater the cleverity of argument you imagine yourself to possess, the greater is your real puerility. You arrive in your argument on this mendaciously stated Fourth Article, at the conclusion, that righteousness is evil, and that unrighteousness is good; and that God as the author, and (as you awfully state) the doer of sin, is unjust, in punishing that, which is his own work. Whereas, all these monstrous profanities are the fabrications of your own brain! And all such enormities of profaneness I have ever most carefully, and with abhorrence condemned, and refuted, in all my writings.

You yourself, however, will one day find, to your sorrow, how abhorrent a crime it is to trifle and lie, in

this manner, concerning the SECRET MYSTERIES of God! And that you may clearly understand that you are not dealing with *me*, in this your war against the truth, but with the SUPREME JUDGE of heaven himself; whose tribunal, you may be assured, you can never escape; listen to that which Job testifies; and certainly, under none other influence than the inspiration of the Holy Spirit;—that the doings of Satan, and of the robbers who plundered him, were the works of God himself. And yet Job never, in the extremest idea, charges God with sin. No such most distant intimation is found in the patriarch. On the contrary, he blesses God's holy name for what He had done by Satan and by these robbers. (Job i. 21.) So also when the brethren of the innocent Joseph sold him to the Ishmaelites, the deed was evidently a most wicked one. But when Joseph ascribes this to God, as his work, so far is he from imputing sin to God, that he considers and lauds his infinite goodness; because that, by this very means, He had given nourishment to his father's whole family. (Gen. xlv.) Again, when Isaiah declares that the Assyrian is the "staff of God's wrath," in his righteous hand, by which He was about to work that terrible slaughter, by means of the same Assyrian (Is. x. 15); the prophet thereby makes God the author of that awful destruction; yet without the least imputation of sin to God, or the most distant idea of it. In like manner, when Jeremiah curses those who do the work of God *negligently* (Jer. xlviii. 10); the prophet, by "the work of the Lord," means all that cruel destruction, which their enemies wrought upon the Jews.—Go then, therefore, and expostulate with the prophet; and declare to *him*, that he has made God to *commit sin*. In a word; all who are in the least acquainted with the Scripture, know full well, that a whole volume might be made of like passages of the Holy Scriptures, where God is made the author, as commander, of the evil and cruel deeds done by men and nations. But it is utterly vain to spend

more words upon a subject so well known and self-evident.

Was it not a signal manifestation of the grace of God when He spared not his own Son? Was it not an equally marvellous exhibition of grace, in Christ, when He delivered up himself? Now wilt thou really here affirm, with thy foul and profane mouth, that God sinned in thus ORDAINING the deed of this crucifixion of his Son, and in *ordaining* the *men* also who should *do* the deed? (Acts iv. 28.) Was God's work of the offering up of his only begotton Son a sin, in Him! O! no! All godly persons very easily untie this knot, as Augustine does, in the following clear and striking manner:—

"When the Father gave up the Son;—when the Lord gave up his own body;—when Judas delivered up the Lord;—how was it, that in this one same 'delivering up,' God was righteous, and man guilty? The reason was, that, in this one same thing, which God and man did, the MOTIVE was not the same, from which GOD, and *man*, ACTED. Hence it is that Peter without hesitation declares, that Pontius Pilate, and Judas, and the other wicked people of the Jews, had done "what God's hand and his counsel had afore determined to be done" (Acts iv. 28); as Peter had just before said, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." (Chap. ii. 23.) Now if you turn your back on the term "foreknowledge," the definitiveness of the terms, "*determinate counsel*," will floor you at once. Nor indeed does the former passage leave the least degree of ambiguity behind it;—namely, that Pontius Pilate and the Jews, and the wicked people, did "whatsoever God's hand and his counsel had before determined to be done." Now if your understanding cannot hold a mystery and a secret so deep as these, why do you not wonder, and exclaim with the apostle Paul, "O the depth!"—why do you daringly trample upon them, as an infuriated madman? Had you been of a teachable mind,

you would have found, in my writings, explications of this deep matter, far more copious than I can here repeat. My present object is only to blunt the edge of your impudence; that it might not disturb the minds of the weak.

ARTICLE V.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY V!]

NO ADULTERY, THEFT, OR MURDER, IS COMMITTED WITHOUT THE INTERVENTION OF THE WILL OF GOD. ("Institutes," chap. xiv. 44.)

ARTICLE VI.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY VI.!]

THE SCRIPTURE OPENLY TESTIFIES, THAT EVIL DOINGS ARE DESIGNED, NOT ONLY BY THE WILL, BUT BY THE AUTHORITY, OF GOD.

CALUMNIATOR'S

STATEMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS.

AGAINST this FIFTH and SIXTH ARTICLE, your opponents bring these, and many other arguments.—If (they say) God wills sin, God is the author of sin. And again, if God wills sin (they argue) it is not the devil that wills sin, for the devil is the mere servant of God. And they affirm, that if God wills sin, He must be inferior to many men: for many men are unwilling to sin. Nay, the nearer any man approaches to the very law of nature the

less he wills sin. Else, how is it that Paul says, "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do." If Paul wills sin by nature (as Calvin saith) how is it that Paul does not will what God wills? And how is it that Paul wills that good, which God (according to Calvin) does not will? Finally, your opponents ask of you, what Scripture testifies, that evil doings are designed of God, not only by his will, but by his authority?

REPLY

OF JOHN CALVIN TO

ARTICLES V. AND VI.,

AND TO THE

CALUMNIATOR'S

STATEMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS THEREON.

In the case of this Fifth Article, it is not without the peculiar intervention of the providence of God that you have pretended to give the reference to the passage in my "Institutes," from which you falsely assert it is extracted. In this instance, readers will see that I state these things in these Articles [that is, Calumnies] which my adversaries bring against my doctrines, just as, and as faithfully as if, they themselves stated them.

Now seizing, as you do, upon this mutilated passage, do you not deserve that every one who passes you should spit in your face?—And though you do not attempt to offer any *reference* in the case of the Sixth Article; yet your real audacity takes a wider leap still. Now tell me! Did I, who, in all my writings, so reverently and

solemnly declare, that whenever and wherever sin is mentioned, the NAME of GOD should be kept, in all solemnity, wide out of the way;—did I ever, or anywhere assert, that 'evil doings were perpetrated, not only by the design but by the authority of God'? Most certainly, nothing can be uttered too powerful or too severe, in condemnation of such monstrous blasphemy. I am willing to hear all that you or any men can say in its *abhorrence.* Let not *my name*, therefore, ever be associated with its horrible profanity.

How successful you are in deceiving fools, I know not; but of one thing I am certain;—that if any one will just take the pains to compare your foul inventions with my genuine writings, your dishonesty and wickedness will leave you painted in your true and execrable colours. You profanely contend, that if God loves sin, He must hate righteousness. And you utter many things in the same line of profanity. And why do you utter them, but that you might be forced at last, to subscribe, under your own convictions, to my *written doctrines.* For not yesterday only, nor the day before yesterday, but for these many years past, I have written, and spoken, concerning Job, thus;—If in the spoliation of that patriarch by robbers, the work of God, and of Satan, and of the plunderers, were one and the same, in the act, abstractedly considered;—how is it that God is clear of all that fault (as He sacredly is), of which fault Satan and the robbers are guilty? Why,—it is thus;—If, in the actions of men, an entire difference exists, when the MOTIVES and ENDS of those actions are duly considered; so that the cruelty of that man is condemned, who barbarously pierces the eyes of a crow; or the sacrilege of him who kills a crane (a bird held in so much religious veneration among the ancients); while the sentence of that judge is lauded, who sanctifies his hands by putting to death a murderer; why should the position of God be held inferior to that of man? Why should not *his* infinite

righteousness vindicate *Him*, and hold Him separate from a participation in the guilt of evil-doing men? Only let readers cursorily observe what I am now about to subjoin. Nay, let them carefully read the whole of that part of my "Institutes," where I am discoursing on the PROVIDENCE of GOD; and he will in a moment see all thy cloudy-minded objections discussed, exposed, answered, and refuted.

Let readers consider also, if they please, what I have written in my Commentary on the Second Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.—Men (I have there shown), when they commit theft or murder, sin against God, *because* they *are* thieves and murderers: and, because, in their theft and in their murder, there is wicked *design*. But God, who makes sovereign use of their wickedness, stands in an infinitely different, and in an all-high position above all men, and acts, and things. And the *objects* and *ends* of God are infinitely different from, and higher than, those of men. God's purpose is, by the wicked acts of men, to chastise some and to exercise the patience of others. Hence in all these his uses of the evil doings of men, God never deviates, in the remotest degree, from his own nature; that is, from his own infinitely perfect rectitude. If then an evil deed is thus to be estimated, according to its end and object, it is fully manifest that God is not, nor can be, the author of sin!

The sum of the whole great matter, is this;—Since an *evil will*, in men, is the cause of all and every sin; God, in performing his righteous counsels, by the hands of men, is so far from being involved in the same sin and fault with men, that, in a marvellous manner He causes, by their means, the light of his glory to shine forth out of darkness. And indeed in that very book of mine, "On the *Providence of God*," which lighted up all these very flames of the deepest pits of hell against me, there will be found, continually occurring, the distinctive declaration, that nothing is more impious, or more preposterous, than

to drag God into a participation of sin or guilt, with man, while He is performing his *secret judgments* by means of the hands of men, and of the devil; *because*, there is no affinity whatever between the *motives* and *ends* of God, and those of men and devils. But there was published by me, more than twelve years ago, a Book, which clearly vindicates both me and my doctrine from all these foul calumnies: and which ought to preserve me free from all this present trouble also, if there were but one spark of honesty or humanity, either in yourself or your fellows. But with reference to that mad and impious dream of the *Libertines*, concerning God being the author of sin, which fascinated so many; how fully I have refuted that horrible idea, I will not now boast. Most certainly I undertook to defend the cause of God therein, purposely; and I proved, with all possible clearness, that God was not, in any sense, or degree, or manner, whatever, the author of sin!

ARTICLE VII.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY VII.!]

WHATSOEVER MEN DO, WHEN AND WHILE THEY SIN, THEY DO ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD: SEEING THAT THE WILL OF GOD OFTEN CONFLICTS WITH HIS PRECEPT.

CALUMNIATOR'S

OBSERVATIONS AND STATEMENTS.

ON this SEVENTH ARTICLE your opponents ask you this question;—If the *will* of God is often at variance with his *precept;* in what way can it be known when God *wills*,

and when He does *not will*, that which He *commands?* For (say they) if Calvin asserts that what God *commands* ought always to be done, whether God *wills* it, or does *not* will it; it will follow, that God *wills*, in order that his will might sometimes be resisted. For if God *commands* me not to commit adultery; and yet *wills* that I *should* commit adultery; and yet, I *ought not* to commit adultery; it follows, that I *ought to do* that which is contrary to his *will*. For when God commands the people of Israel generally, "Thou shalt not commit adultery;" does He mean that none of them should commit adultery; or that some should commit adultery, but that others should not? On this point, Calvin, your adversaries ask of you some direct answer. If you reply, that God wills that some should commit adultery, but that He at the same time wills that others should *not;* you will make God inconsistent with himself, in the one same precept.

If you reply to these arguments of your adversaries, by asserting that God has a twofold *will;* the one open and *manifest*, the other *secret;* they next inquire,—Who was it, then, that made this *secret will* known to Calvin? For if Calvin and his followers know this secret will, it cannot be *secret:* and if they know it *not*, how dare they affirm that, which they *know not?*

Your opponents again inquire, whether God commands *according* to his will, when He enjoins his people to pray, "Thy will be done;" and where Christ also saith, "He that doeth the will of my Father, which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother." (Mark iii. 35.) There is also that passage of Paul, "Behold thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest that which is excellent, and art a teacher of the law." (Rom. ii. 17.) Surely, we have here the *will* of God, and that which is commanded in the law; which will, if it be good (which it certainly is), it must necessarily follow, that that which is contrary thereto, is evil: for whatsoever is contrary to

good, must be evil. There is, moreover, that memorable ejaculation of Christ, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, &c., but thou wouldest not." Christ most certainly speaks here of the open or manifest will of God: namely, that will which He (Christ) himself had explained, in so many ways. Now if Christ had in his mind another will of God, contrary to this will, his whole life must have been a contradiction.

REPLY

OF JOHN CALVIN TO

ARTICLE VII.,

AND TO

CALUMNIATOR'S

OBSERVATIONS, STATEMENTS,

&c., &c.

I AM utterly unconcerned to make to this SEVENTH ARTICLE any reply at all.—Produce me the place, in my writings, where I have asserted that "the *will* of God is frequently at variance with, or conflicts with, his precept." Such an idea never entered my mind: no, not even as a dream. Nay, on the entire contrary, among many other kindred explanations, I have faithfully expounded and set forth how simple, and uniform, and one, the will of God is; although, between the *secret counsel* of God and his *general doctrine*, there is, to ignorant and inexperienced persons, at first sight, a certain *appearance* of difference. But whosoever modestly and soberly and reverently *sub*mits and *com*mits himself to God and his teaching, will in a

moment see and acknowledge (as far as the human mind's capacity can see, and acknowledge it,) *how* it is, that God, who forbids adultery and fornication, punishes, by the incestuous intercourse of Absalom with the wives of David, David's sin of adultery with the wife of Uriah. God ever wills one and the same thing; but, frequently, in different forms. Wherefore, that the foulness of your lies may not cast any filth on me, or my doctrine, let my readers receive, in one word, this solemn declaration;—that that which you cast in my teeth, as promulgated by me, concerning the *two wills* of God, is an entire fiction of your own. For, as to myself, I have ever proclaimed, that there is between the *secret* or hidden counsel of God, and the *openly* revealed voice of his doctrine, the most perfect, divine, and consummate harmony!

Augustine did, indeed, by way of concession and explanation to his adversaries, make mention of a *twofold* will, or of different wills of God;—a *secret will*, and an open or *revealed will:* but he *so* represented that *twofold will*, as to *show*, that they are in such consummate harmony with each other, that the "last day" will make it most gloriously manifest, that there never was, nor is, in this multiform way of God's workings and doings, the least variance, conflict, or contradiction; but the most divine and infinite harmony and onenesss.

Having laid down this solemn principle and taken this immoveable stand, I will now, if thou wilt have it so, draw swords with thee, in battle for the truth.—Thou arguest thus;—'If God forbids a man to do that which He really wills him to do, all the time; or if He commands men to do that, which He really wills not; He must command for the *very purpose*, that his will might be resisted.'—Now in none of all this filth of argumentation are either myself or my doctrines the least concerned. I acknowledge nothing whatever of the profane sentiments to which it refers, to be mine. On the contrary, the sum of my doctrine is this;—that *that* will of God,

which is set forth in his Law, clearly demonstrates, that righteousness is his delight, and that iniquity is his hatred; and also, that it is most certain, that He would not denounce punishment against evil doers, if their evil doings pleased Him. This however by no means prevents God from *willing*, by his secret and unexplicable counsel, that those things *should be done*, in a certain sense and manner, which He yet *wills* not to be done, and which He forbids to be done.

If you will here raise the objection,—that I make God inconsistent with himself; I, in return, would ask you, whether it belongs to you to prescribe a law or a bound for God, forbidding Him to do anything that surpasses your judgment and comprehension! Moses declares aloud, that 'the secret things of God belong unto himself alone; but that whatsoever things are useful for man to know, are revealed in the Law.' (Deut. xxix. 29.) Will *you* therefore deny God the right of doing anything but that, the reason of which you can fully comprehend and explain? After the depth of the counsel of God, which engulfs all human capacities of comprehension, has been fully declared, in the Book of Job; the sublime description closes with this significant intimation, "Lo! these are parts of his ways; but how little is heard of Him!" (Job xxvi. 14.) But as for you, you will not permit God to have any counsel to himself, but that which you can as plainly see as a thing which you behold with your natural eyes. You are more than blind, however, if you cannot see, that when God, by his voice, forbids you to commit adultery, his will is that you should not be an adulterer; and yet, that He, the same Great God, exercises his righteous judgments in those same adulteries, which He condemns; which righteous judgments He most certainly exercises not, but with his full knowledge and will.

Take the matter more briefly and condensedly thus.—God wills that adultery should not be committed, in as

far as it is a pollution, and violation of the holy bond of matrimony, and a great transgression of his righteous law. But, in as far as God *uses* adulteries, as well as other wicked doings of men, to execute his own acts of vengeance on the sins of men; He certainly executes the office and performs the sacred duty of a JUDGE, not unwillingly, but willingly! Wherefore, in what instances soever either the Chaldæans or Assyrians acted cruelly, in their terrible victories and horrible slaughters; for such awful barbarities, we by no means praise them. Nay, farther, God himself declares, that He will be the avenger of the afflicted and inhumanly treated: and yet, the same righteous God, elsewhere, declares, that these slaughters are sacrifices, which He has in this way prepared *for himself!* (Is. xxix.; and xxxiv. 6; Jer. xlvi. 10; Ezek. xxxix.) And will you deny that God *wills* that, which He thus dignifies with the honoured designation of "a sacrifice"? Awake then from thy slumber; open thine eyes from thy blindness; and at length acknowledge, that God, by secret and inexplicable ways, rules and overrules his righteous judgments.

You, however, by a subtlety of argument, which you deem marvellously wise, inquire, whether God, from the time that He first forbade men to commit adultery, *willed* that all should be adulterers, or only a part of them.—Take this as a sure and certain reply.—God demands of all men chastity; because God loveth chastity in all men. Experience itself, however, manifests (without our entering into any proof, or mention, of the important facts themselves) that there are, in God, different reasons, motives, and manners, of his *willing*. For if He equally and effectually willed that all men should be chaste, He would, without all doubt, make and render all men chaste. Wherefore, since chastity is a singular gift of God, the prompt and evident conclusion is, that He wills that, which He *commands* in his Word, differently from that which He *effectually works* and fulfils, by his regenerating

Spirit. Hence, your impure and profane tongue has no ground whatever for charging God with inconsistency. God is neither dubious nor ambiguous, in anything which He commands or forbids: but He plainly discovers his pure and holy nature, in both. Neither will you find anything contrary to this his purity, holiness, and righteousness, in that *secret* and *hidden* will of his, by which He rules, and overrules, all the actions of the sons of men.

Whoredom is highly displeasing to God as the author of all chastity. Yet the same holy God's will was, to punish the adultery of David by the incestuous lust of Absalom. God forbid's man's blood to be shed. For as He greatly loves his own image, so He defends it, by his own protection. And yet, He raised up, out of the wicked nations, slaughterers of the sons of Eli; *because* it was his *will* that they should be killed: for so the Sacred History plainly and literally teaches us.—If *your* blindness is as a stone-wall in your way; yet all who really have eyes see a perfectly holy and harmonious consistency in God; when He, the same Divine Being who hates whoredom and slaughter, in as far as they are sins; or (which is the same thing) who hates the sins of whoredom and of murder, *because* they are transgressions of his righteous law; yet exercises his *secret* and righteous *judgments* in justly punishing the wickednesses of nations and of men, by means of the cruelties and sins of other nations, and other men. And as to your own conceit of your acute wisdom, when you ask the question,—'If there be any *secret* will of God, when, and how, will *that will* be revealed to me'?—The answer to your impious question will contain no difficulty, when you have granted to me the *acknowledgement,* that we are to follow the Holy Spirit alone, as our teacher. For if God, according to the testimony of Paul, "dwelleth in the light that no man can approach unto;" and if the same apostle reverentially declares, that "his ways are past finding out;" why am I

not freely permitted to wonder at, and adore, that *secret will* of his, which is hidden from my comprehension? The wisdom of God is exalted, in the book of Job, with the highest praises; that mortals may know and confess, that it cannot be spanned by any human intellect. Are you then purposed to laugh at everything which is said, concerning a matter so sublimely secret? Will you upbraid David with folly, for solemnly proclaiming and adoring those judgments of God which he confessed to be a "great deep"? I hear from all the prophets, and from all the apostles, that the counsels of God are incomprehensible. What they *all* declare, I embrace with a firm and unhesitating faith: and what I believe, I freely and undoubtingly profess and teach. Why, then, is this my reverence for God's *secret will*, charged upon me as a fault and a crime?

And that you may not turn round upon me, and say, that I adduce, from the Scriptures, examples and proofs wholly irrelevant; Paul's cause and mine are surely one and the same; who, when speaking of the *secret* election or reprobation of God, and adoring the riches and profundity of his wisdom, the incomprehensibility of his judgments, and the unsearchableness of his ways; yet, ceases not openly to affirm, that God hath mercy on whom He will, and consigns whom He will to eternal destruction.—In a word; exult, I pray you, no more in the irreconcileable inconsistency which you imagine you have discovered in my doctrines. For the Scriptures furnish an abundance of testimonies, concerning the *secret* and *hidden* will of God. What I have from them learned, I fearlessly assert and speak of, as a thing sure and certain. But as my human intellect cannot soar to a height so stupendous, I adore, with reverence, fear, and trembling, that mystery, which is too high and too deep for the angels themselves to penetrate. And this is my reason for offering so frequently, in my writings, the admonitory warning,—that nothing is better or safer, in these solemn

matters, than wise ignorance! Because, the folly of those who suffer themselves to be, or who wish to be, wise above what is written or permitted of God, is worse than the phrenzy of madmen.

By this time you must see, how sure and certain I hold that will of God to be, concerning which the Scriptures so clearly and fully testify: which same will, is, nevertheless, so secret and incomprehensible, with reference to the reasons WHY God wills this or that, or HOW He wills this or that, that the angelic intellects cannot grasp the comprehension.—The fact is, that the pride and presumption of yourself, and of all like you, so madden ye all, that whatever ye cannot comprehend, but are compelled to relinquish, as beyond your capacity, ye labour, with all your might, to make out to be nothing at all!—As to your continuing to cast in my teeth inconsistencies, contrarieties, and contradictions;—I have settled all those a hundred times over. And as to your scurrility by which you attempt to overwhelm me; all that, being insipid and pointless, penetrates me not. And as to your charge against me, that I am an imitator of God;—you, on account of your presumptuous and devil-like imitation of his *wisdom*, will one day find, to your eternal cost, what it is to exalt your own wisdom and to make yourself therein equal unto the Most High.—The only pain and agony I feel are caused by your phrenzied blasphemies; by which you profane the sacred Majesty of God: of which profanation, He will himself be, in his appointed time, the sure and certain AVENGER!

As the will of God, which He has revealed in his Law, is good; whatsoever is contrary to that Law and that will, I acknowledge to be evil. But when you brawl, that *that* secret and hidden will of God, by which He separates the "vessels of mercy" from the "vessels of wrath," according to "his good pleasure;" and by which He makes use of both "vessels," as He will, is contrary to his Law;—when you utter this, you breathe forth from the foul sink

of your ignorance a detestable fiction of your own brain, and a horrible lie.

I freely acknowledge, that Christ is speaking of the *revealed* will of God, when he says, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, &c., and ye would not." For He is upbraiding the Jews with the same ingratitude and hardness of heart as He had before done, in the song of Moses. (Exod. xv., 17, &c.) And we know full well, that God did, in reality, bestow on the Jewish nation all the blessings which the words of that Song expresses: seeing that, by the giving them his Law, by the ordinances of his worship, and by the many benefits which He conferred on that people, and by which He bound them to himself, He protected them as it were, by the over-shadowing of his wings: and he would still have done so, had not their indomitable obstinacy and obduracy carried them away from Him. After therefore Christ had testified his *will*, so often, and in so many different ways, spoken in order to win a perverse nation to their obedience, but all in vain; it is with the utmost justice that He complains of their ingratitude. For, as to your restricting all these things to the lifetime of Christ; this you do with your usual ignorance of these divine things.—Just as if Christ were not the true God! who, from the beginning, had not ceased to spread the wings of grace over his own elect people!—But here you, in a moment, conclude, that, if there were another and secret will in Christ, while He thus addressed Jerusalem, the whole life of Christ must have been an inconsistency. —Just as if, to allure by the voice and by kindnesses; and yet, to leave the heart untouched by the inspiration of his secret Spirit, were, in Christ, diverse and contrary acts!

But, that the absurdity and futility of your calumny may the more plainly appear, answer me I pray you this question.—Where does Christ complain that He was mistaken or deceived by the event, that the vine, from

which He had expected grapes, brought forth wild grapes? What answer have you to give, noble teacher, and skilful rhetorician? Will you impute ignorance to Christ, to avoid making Him speak falsely? What! did the Jews entirely prevent and defeat the purposes of God? Why! according to you, the blessed God was sitting in doubt, all the time, as to what the event would be; and that event quite deceived and surprised Him, at last!—No! nor will it at all alter the state of the case, if you make the saying of Christ, which He speaks to the fact, and to the state of Jerusalem, refer to the *secret foreknowledge* of God. God had elsewhere said, "Surely they will fear my name" (Zeph. iii. 7); but they hastened to corrupt themselves, more and more. God had expected some profit from his great punishments inflicted: but He afterwards complains that He was disappointed. Can you, then, disentangle yourself from this divine set of truth, in no other way, than by reducing God to order, and making Him depend, for the accomplishment of his eternal purposes, upon the *free-will* of men! Surely it is plain and evident to the meanest capacity, that God, in order to set forth the greatness of the wickedness of his people, speaks as in the person, and after the manner, of men, when they complain, that all their labour is lost; because they are quite disappointed in their expected success.

It is most certain, that those whom God wills to gather unto himself effectually, He 'draws.' by his Spirit: and that *that*, which it is in his hand and purpose to do, He will, according to his promises, perform. Wherefore, when many, who are called, follow Him not; it is openly manifest, that *that* manner of gathering together, of which Christ complains, as having been unfruitful and inefficacious, was *not* attended with that *efficacious* influence of his Spirit; of which He elsewhere makes frequent mention; as, for instance, by the prophet Isaiah; "He shall gather together the dispersed of Judah." (Is. xi. 12.) Again,

"The glory of the Lord shall gather thee." (Is. lviii. 8.) Again, "I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west." (Is. xliii. 5.) Again, "Your God will be your rereward (or will gather you)." (Is. lii. 12.) For the prophet had just before said, "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm," that his power might be displayed "before the eyes of all the nations." (Is. lii. 10.) Hence it is, that the prophet a little afterwards, repeats, "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee." (Is. liv. 7.) But what I have before advanced concerning the PRECEPTS of God; is sufficient and abundant, I hope, to stop the mouth of all your blasphemies.—Although therefore God *commands* nothing feignedly, or ambiguously, or fictitiously, but plainly and solemnly declares what He *wills* and approves; yet his mind and will are, that a different kind of *obedience* should be rendered to Him by his elect (whom He effectually bends and turns to his obedience), from that which is offered to Him by the reprobate; whom, indeed, He *also* calls to himself, by the *outward voice* of his Word; but whom He condescends not *effectually* 'to draw,' by his Spirit.

The natural obstinacy and depravity of all men are alike. So that no man will take upon himself the yoke of obedience to God, voluntarily and willingly. To some, God promises the Spirit of obedience: others He leaves in their depravity. For notwithstanding all your vain talk about it, the truth is that "a heart of flesh," and "a new heart," are not promised to *all* men, promiscuously, but to the elect, *peculiarly*, that they might walk in the commandments of God. What have you to reply to these things, noble teacher and judge of the truth! And what if God invites the whole mass of mankind to come unto Him, and yet, knowingly and of his own will, denies his Spirit to the greater part; 'drawing' a few only into obedience to himself, by his Spirit's secret inspiration and

operation!—Is the adorable God to be charged, on that account, with inconsistency?

ARTICLE VIII.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY VIII.!]

THE HARDENING OF PHARAOH, AND SO, HIS OBSTINACY OF MIND AND REBELLION, WAS THE WORK OF GOD, EVEN ON THE TESTIMONY OF MOSES HIMSELF; WHO ASCRIBES ALL THE REBELLION OF PHARAOH TO GOD.

ARTICLE IX.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY IX.!]

THE WILL OF GOD IS THE SUPREME CAUSE OF ALL THE HARDNESS OF HEART, IN MEN.

CALUMNIATOR'S

STATEMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS.

UNDER the EIGHTH and NINTH ARTICLES your adversaries ask this question. What then does Moses mean, when he writes, "And Pharaoh hardened his heart"?—Are we to interpret the words, "And Pharaoh hardened his heart" thus;—that is, 'And *God hardened* the heart of Pharaoh'?—Now, surely this must be a far more violent manner of speaking than to say, 'God hardened the heart of Pharaoh:' *that is*, God *knew* Pharaoh as to the natural hardness of his heart; *because* Pharaoh had

refused to obey Him.—Another like question they ask concerning the words, "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Now if you should interpret this passage by rendering it, 'God would not have you harden your hearts,' such explanation would involve the greatest absurdity: for it would be making God command men to do that, which is the prerogative of himself alone. For if the hardening of hearts is the work of God, it is absurd to command men to harden their own hearts, or *not* to harden their own hearts: for they could no more do it, than they could add one cubit to their stature, or take one cubit from it.

REPLY

OF JOHN CALVIN TO

ARTICLES VIII. AND IX.

&c., &c., &c.

HERE again I do beg of my readers, thou unholy Calumniator of THE TRUTH, to give me their confidence; and to compare my writings and my whole "line" of teaching with your perverted and mutilated ARTICLES. If they will kindly do this, your SLANDERS will at once be detected; and all the flame of animosity which you thus light up against me, will soon go out, of itself. Meanwhile, I deny not that I have taught, as Moses and Paul teach, that the heart of Pharaoh '*was hardened*' of God. Hereupon, however, despising both Moses and Paul, and considering all that is read in them as nought, you take upon yourself to expostulate with me; and to ask me whether, since we read, in one place, that "*Pharaoh* hardened his heart," there is any necessity for giving a more violent interpretation of the passage, and to say,

that "*God* hardened the heart of Pharoah"? Now I need no farther reply to this your question, than that which you furnish in the words of this lying ARTICLE, yourself: which you, pretending to quote from my writings, or corrupting, or not comprehending them, make to say, that, as the will of God is the *supreme* or *remote* cause of the induration; man himself, who hardens his own heart, is, and must be, the *proximate* cause of the hardening. Now, I have everywhere most distinctly shown the difference between the *supreme* or *remote* cause, and all *mediate* and *proximate* causes. For while a sinner can find the root of every evil affection in himself, what ground can there be for charging God with any fault of such sinner's transgressions? Such an accuser of God, acts as I have elsewhere said, just like the nurse of Medea, as represented by the ancient poet; who preposterously exclaims, "O that the planks that formed the ship Argo, had never been cut down, by the axe, on Mount Pelion!" For all the while, the impure princess, her mistress, was burning with her own depraved lust, and felt herself driven headlong by its force to betray and ruin her father's kingdom. This foolish nurse blames neither her mistress's corrupt passion, nor the deep enticements of Jason, nor sees those *immediate* causes, at all; but goes on complaining of the ship that brought Jason to Colchis; and laments that such a ship was ever built, in Greece. Exactly in the same manner does the man who, being conscious of his own sin and fault, fetches a *remote* cause of his iniquity from afar, even from God himself, utterly and ridiculously forget what he himself is.

Surely, then, you must now see, that although God does, in his *own* secret and sovereign way, harden men's hearts; yet, that no fault can possibly be imputed to Him; because every man hardens his own heart, by the essential evil and wickedness of his own nature.

But when God turns the hearts of men to the obedience and worship of himself; *that* is another form of his

working, altogether. For as we are all, by nature, bent on obstinacy and resistance, no man will desire to do good, unless he be acted upon of God, and led so to do. And though the Scripture saith that "the preparations of the heart, in man, are from the Lord," and that the faithful prepare their hearts to seek God, and to render him a voluntary worship; the Scripture by no means contradicts itself herein; but it distinctly shows, that all the true worshippers of God render Him their service willingly, and from an affection and holy freedom of soul. And yet, again, this by no means stands in contradiction, or in the way, of the fact, that God, all the while, performs his part by the operations and influences of his secret Spirit.

But with reference to his hardening men's hearts; *that* is a different way of God's working, as I have just observed. Because God does not govern the reprobate by his regenerating Spirit; but He gives them over to the devil; and leaves them to be his slaves; and He so overrules their depraved wills, by his secret judgment and counsel, that they can do nothing but that which He has decreed. Hence, such is the Divine harmony and marvellous consistency of these things, that though God hardens whomsoever He will; yet every one so hardened, is the cause and author of his own induration. But that I may not extend my observations to too great a length, in replying to this ARTICLE; let me be permitted to impress on the minds and memories of godly and upright readers, the following admonition of Augustine: "When the apostle says that God 'gave' certain characters 'over to vile affections;' it is preposterous ignorance to refer this to the longsuffering of God. For the same apostle elsewhere connects the *long-suffering* of God with his *power:* as where he says, 'What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction?' (Rom. ix. 22)," &c. Indeed even if this

learned and pious father and teacher had never written or spoken on this great matter, the authority of God alone ought to be enough, and more than sufficient, for our understanding and faith. It is not *I* that said, that 'God taketh away the hearts of princes and causeth them to err;' or 'that God held the heart of Pharaoh that he might not incline to humanity and mercy.' It is not *I* that said, 'that God turned the hearts of the nations, and hardened them to hate his people;' or, 'that He hissed for the Egyptians and used them as his servants.' It was not *I* that said 'that Sennacherib was God's rod in his hand, to punish his people.' *I* did not say all these things. They are all the declarations of the SPIRIT of GOD himself.

What! When the Scripture itself affirms, that Saul was carried away, by an evil Spirit from God; will you ascribe this to the *sole patience*, or mere *permission*, of God? How much nearer the truth is Augustine, in his admonitory instruction, when he observes—"The sins which Satan and the wicked commit, are their own: but that which is accomplished *by* their sins, is effected by the *power* of God; who divides the darkness from the light, as He will."—Now you charge me with saying *that*, which God himself asserts, all the while, in his own words. In this matter, let the same Augustine reply to you, in my stead: where he says, "If the Scripture be carefully examined, it shows, that God not only directs those *good wills* of men (which wills He has made good out of evil wills), unto good actions and unto eternal life; but that those wills also, which remain in their natural corruption, are so under the power of God, that He turns and inclines them, whensoever and whithersoever He will; either to confer blessings, or to inflict punishments; and that He does this, by judgments the most secret, but at the same time the most just."

ARTICLE X.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY X.!],

SATAN IS A LIAR, AT THE COMMAND OF GOD.

AGAINST this TENTH ARTICLE, Calvin, which is a part of your doctrine, your adversaries argue thus.—If Satan is a liar at the command of God; to be a liar, is just; and therefore Satan is just. For if it is just to command a lie (and, if Calvin speak the truth, it is); then, to obey a lie, is also to be considered just, from the justice of the precept. And again, as, to obey an unjust precept is unjust; so, to obey a just precept, is just.—If Calvin hereupon reply, that Satan is not a liar *obediently;* that is out of mere obedience to God; we reply, according to Calvin's own sentiments, that Satan's being a liar, but not out of obedience to God, is also at the command of God.

REPLY

OF JOHN CALVIN TO

ARTICLE X.

AND TO CALUMNIATOR'S OBSERVATIONS, ETC., THEREON.

Now only reflect at what kind of *a man* it is that you are hurling your shafts! For that assertion, at which you aim your weapons, is not mine: it proceeds from the Spirit of God himself. The very words of the Scripture are these, "Whom shall I send? and who will go for us?" Immediately upon which, God calls Satan, and commands him to go and to be a lying spirit in the mouth of all the

prophets, in order that he might deceive Ahab. (1 Kings xxii. 20, 21, 22.) Now then bark, dog as you are, as loud as you will. You will no more obscure the glory of God, by your revilings, than you can obscure the brightness of the sun by spitting in his blazing face. But here again let me use the words of Augustine, rather than my own, "When God testifies that false prophets are sent by Him, and that his hand is upon them, to cause them to deceive men, or kings; this is not an act of his mere *patience* or *permission*, but an exercise of his effectual *power*." As to your prating that Satan is not a liar, by the command of God, out of obedience to that command; it is no marvel that you entangle yourself in knots and nets, without number, whilst you refuse to acknowledge that God uses the workings of Satan, in an inexplicable manner, according to his sovereign will, that He may thereby manifest the justice and equity of his supreme dominion. Yet He never liberates the wicked instruments which He uses, from the sin and the guilt, which are *theirs:* which instruments, his power compels to execute his decrees: and, in some sense, even against their own wills. Though therefore your bitter malice may howl, an hundred times over; what I utter is not the voice of Calvin, but the voice of God: who saith, "I have given commandment unto my saints." Wherefore, if you imagine that God assumes to himself more than He ought; He will sooner or later find a way to clear and vindicate himself, from all such accusations as thine, and to take vengeance on all such accusers as thee!

ARTICLE XI.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY XI.!]

GOD GIVES THE WILL TO THOSE WHO DO EVIL. HE ALSO SUGGESTS DEPRAVED AND DISHONEST AFFECTIONS:

NOT ONLY PERMISSIVELY BUT EFFECTIVELY; AND THAT TOO, FOR HIS OWN GLORY.

AGAINST this ELEVENTH ARTICLE your opponents argue thus.—Calvin actually attributes to God, that which evidently belongs to the devil: as is manifest from the united testimony of the whole of Scripture. Moreover, if God suggests depraved and dishonest affections, and yet commands us to resist depraved affections, He must positively command us to resist himself; and is therefore inconsistent with himself. "Every good gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights" (the Scripture saith). Are then even depraved affections to be considered good gifts? Do they also come down from the Father of lights?—James plainly asserts, 'that no one is tempted of God, but that every man is tempted by his own heart's lust.' And whereas you add that God doeth this for his own glory, your opponents maintain that such an idea is absurd. Nebuchadnezzar did indeed experience the justice and the power of God, when, on account of his own pride, he was changed into the nature and habits of a brute: and he gave glory to God for the same: because he judged, and plainly saw, that God therein was *just* as well as *mighty*.

REPLY

OF JOHN CALVIN TO

ARTICLE XI.,

AND TO CALUMNIATOR'S OBSERVATIONS, ETC., THEREON.

HERE again you go on, as before, to fabricate monsters

out of your own brain, and to slaughter them in your own imagination, glorying to yourself in a mighty triumph, which you vainly think you had gained over a harmless servant of God. But, as to the places in my works, wherein I have spoken or taught the doctrines contained in this ARTICLE; those places you are, and ever will be, wholly unable to find. Wherefore without my saying one word, your futility and your impudence also, fall to the ground together. As to the murders, the adulteries, the rapines, and the frauds, &c., with which the wicked pollute themselves; my teaching is, that all these wickednesses proceed from the desperate evil of their own natures; but I teach that God, who bringeth light out of darkness, so rules, in these wicked men, and by them, that, by his secret, incomprehensible judgment, He executes, by the wickedness of these men, his own eternal decrees. Now if you will fight against these solemn truths, prepare, at once, to enter into battle with God himself. He is quite prepared to receive your insane onset!

If there were but in you one drop or spark of modesty or docility, that distinction which I ever make, and which continually occurs in my writings, must at once, undoubtedly, satisfy your mind. If the wicked, who discover the root of all evil in themselves, would but ask their own consciences where all the fault lies, those consciences would testify, that the whole fault of all their wickedness is found in that root of all iniquity, within them. Nor could they fail to see, that God, by righteously turning their depraved wills whithersoever He pleases, uses those evil affections for the working of various good. As to quarrelling with this, I tell you again, you are not contending against me but against God himself. O that you could, from your heart, acknowledge God to be indeed the Father of lights! Then you would not, as Paul descriptively expresses it, force yourself, by your audacity, into "that light which no man can approach unto:"

—you would not thus turn, by your profane insolence, that light into darkness.

Moreover you disclose your ignorance and folly, when you conclude, that because every *good* thing cometh down from the Father of lights; therefore, those terrible acts of righteous vengeance, at which the wicked fear and tremble, do *not* proceed from the same glorious being. Still greater is your folly and stupidity, when you ask me, whether I consider depraved and perverse affections to be among the *good* and perfect gifts which *come down* from the Father of lights.—O yes! You are yourself a solemn proof, that there is a wonderful difference between the spirit of wisdom, and of judgment, and of knowledge, and the spirit of slumber and of delusion: though both are sent of God: the one in mercy, the other in judgment.—Yes! There is a marvellous difference between the Spirit of regeneration, who creates the faithful anew in the image of God, and an evil spirit from God, who drives the reprobate into madness; as in the case of Saul.

With equal impudence it is, that you attack me when I teach, that God executes his decrees by means of Satan and the reprobate, to the manifestation of his own glory. That Satan is an instrument of his wrath, God plainly testifies, both in his Word and by universal experience. And to what *end* do we say that God works by the hand of Satan, unless we mean thereby, that God, by means of Satan, and his malice and doings, works his own glory and the manifestation of it? By this clever cavil of yours respecting Satan, you think you have eluded the net of the Divine matter. Why! you cannot hinder God from working his own glory, by all these your iniquitous contendings against the truth. No! No more than Pharaoh could, by his madness of pride, prevent God from showing forth the brightness of his glory: because God, "for that very deed raised him up," that by him He might manifest forth the glory of his "power." You

would meet me, by saying, that Nebuchadnezzar gave glory to God, when he confessed the justice of God in his terrible judgments. But that you might know in what contempt I hold all your pointless and ineffectual shafts, I will myself willingly aid you in this your argument, and will put that into your mind, which, otherwise, never would have entered there. For what end did Joshua call upon Achan to give glory to God? His object was to show that God would be glorified by the detection of Achan's profane theft and lie.

But the essential question is, now, whether there is but *one* way in which God can show forth his glory. For if the glory of God did not continually shine forth out of the *lies*, as well as out of other wickednesses of men, Paul speaks in vain when he says that God alone is true, but all men are liars; and he speaks equally in vain when he immediately adds, "But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say, Is God unrighteous"? (Rom. iii. 5.)

When you argue, that God's will is, that He should be praised by all nations for the blessings which He confers; what you assert is true; provided you grant also, that there is a mighty wood of circumstances out of which God, by his wonderful workings, secures praises and glory to himself. And by your ignorance of this, you bring on yourself the just punishments of your pride. For, professedly laughing at all sound logic and legitimate reasoning, you perpetually argue from the *species* to the *genus*, negatively.

Nor will I deem your profane and blasphemous jest worthy any lengthened reply; when you intimate, that God might as well punish men for wearing the beards which himself has created. For who ever asserted that iniquity was created of God? although it be true, that God, by his secret and incomprehensible purpose, ordains and overrules the working of that iniquity, to righteous, good, and glorious ends. Away! therefore, with your

stupid and insipid insolence: when you ignorantly confound the *beard* of men, which grows naturally and imperceptibly, even while they are asleep, with their *acts* of wickedness; which are voluntary, perceptible, and conscious.—Rage against me, as rabidly as you will. This I nevertheless hold fast and maintain, that although God does, indeed, decree and overrule the depraved affections of men to the accomplishment of his own eternal purposes; yet, He nevertheless righteously punishes the depraved agents and instruments themselves; and makes them to stand condemned in their own consciences.

Only observe, how you again entangle yourself in a net of your own creation; when you pretend to confess, that the secrets of God are unknown to us; and yet would maintain, that his justice, like the justice of man, is clearly comprehensible by us.—Now suppose any one should ask you whether there is *any justice* contained in *the secrets* of God; would you deny that there is? Will you then pretend or assert that that justice of God, in his *secret acts*, which David and Paul contemplate with wonder and adoration, because it surpasses the utmost stretch of their mental comprehension, is easily intelligible and plainly known? Do not the profundity of the depth, and the riches of the height, of the *wisdom* of God in his marvellous judgments, contain in them *justice?* Why then will you deny that God is just whensoever the reason of his works surpasses your comprehension? There is, in the book of Job, a Divine and remarkable distinction made between that wisdom of God which is unsearchable, and the brightness of which holds all human nature at an immeasurable distance, and that wisdom which is made manifest to us in his revealed and written law. In the same manner you, if you did not thus confound all things, ought to have made a distinction between that wonderful and profound justice of God, which no human capacity can comprehend, and that rule of justice which

God has prescribed for the regulation of the lives of men, in his revealed Law. I at once confess, that it is by the openly revealed doctrine of the Gospel, that God will assuredly judge the world. But He will as assuredly vindicate, at the same time, the righteousness of his SECRET PROVIDENCE, against all profane brawlers!

Indeed, were you but acquainted, even in the least degree, with that Gospel, concerning which you thus vainly prate, you would easily understand, how it is, that God richly rewards that righteousness which He sets forth in his glorious law, nor ever deprives of their promised crown, those, who from the heart obey his commandments; and yet, righteously punishes all those who refuse their obedience. These latter, nevertheless, He calls his *servants:* because He holds their hearts in his hands, for the accomplishment of his eternal purposes. Hence Nebuchadnezzar, that furious plunderer of nations, and slave of Satan, is called by Jeremiah, and with peculiar significance, the "servant" of God. And if I have taught that God, as is manifest, by his judgments on every side, inclines the hearts of man hither and thither, for the execution of his purposes and decrees;—when the prophets of God declare these same things in the same words, and when I cite their own words, why impute you such citations as awful crimes committed by me?—Are not these the very words of the Divine history?—"And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah." (2 Sam. xxiv. 1.)

ARTICLE XII.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY XII.!]

THE WICKED, BY THEIR ACTS OF WICKEDNESS, DO RATHER GOD'S WORK, THAN THEIR OWN.

CALUMNIATOR'S

OBSERVATIONS AND STATEMENTS ON

ARTICLE XII.

WITH reference to this TWELFTH ARTICLE, Calvin, which is your doctrine, your opponents argue thus.—If this really be the case, then, God is often angry at that which is good. For if wickedness is the work of God, wickedness itself is good: for *all* the works of God are *good*. And again, if wickedness is good, it follows, of necessity, that godliness is evil: because it is the direct contrary to wickedness. Hence, it will again follow, that when the holy Scriptures command us to hate evil, and love that which is good, they command us to love wickedness and to hate godliness. Your opponents moreover affirm, that this ARTICLE of your doctrine really savours of *libertinism;* and they consequently marvel that you should be so determined a foe to the *libertines*.

REPLY

OF JOHN CALVIN TO

ARTICLE XII.,

[THAT IS, CALUMNY XII.!]

AND TO CALUMNIATOR'S OBSERVATIONS, ETC., THEREON.

BEFORE God, and the angels, and the whole world, I here again testify, that what I did truly teach upon this subject, you have by the basest and most wicked calumny,

utterly perverted.—If it really seems to you an absurdity to teach, that the wicked do the work of God; enter the battle at once with Jeremiah, the prophet of God; whose words are these, "Cursed is he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently, and that keepeth back his sword from blood." (Jer. xlviii. 10.) Now by the work of the Lord, the prophet evidently and undeniably means, hostile slaughters and desolations; which you surely must call wickedness; seeing that they proceed from pure avarice, cruelty, and pride. The Chaldæans were urged on to make war upon Moab by their own ambition and thirst for plunder; so that regardless of all justice, they forced on their way, by rapine and slaughter, to accomplish their inhuman purposes. But since it pleased God to punish, by *their* hands, the idolatry and defiance of the Moabites, their *depravity* did not alter the *fact* of their executing the judgments of God upon the Moabites, by their wicked hands. What availeth then your barking and growling? What availeth your profane logic and argument, 'that, *therefore*, wickedness is good'? As if wickedness could be imputed unto God; because, by his wonderful working, He turns the wickednesses of men to an end and a purpose entirely different to those which the wicked themselves designed! Nay, you would even class me with the Libertines; the mad delusions of which sect I have laboured to expose and confute, beyond all other men: so that I need no new defence of myself, on the present occasion.

ARTICLE XIII.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY XIII.!]

WE SIN OF NECESSITY (WITH RESPECT TO GOD), WHETHER WE SIN OF OUR OWN PURPOSE, OR ACCIDENTALLY.

ARTICLE XIV.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY XIV.!]

WHAT WICKEDNESSES SOEVER MEN COMMIT OF THEIR OWN WILL, THOSE WICKEDNESSES PROCEED ALSO FROM THE WILL OF GOD.

CALUMNIATOR'S

OBSERVATIONS AND STATEMENTS ON

ARTICLES XIII. AND XIV.

AGAINST these TWO ARTICLES your opponents urge the following arguments.—If we sin of necessity all admonitions are evidently vain: and the prophet Jeremiah therefore speaks these words to the people, in vain, "Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death: He that abideth in the city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey." (Jer. xxi. 8, 9.) All this warning and admonition is utterly vain, I repeat, if, from the state and necessity of things, to flee unto the Chaldæans was as great an impossibility as to swallow a mountain.

If Calvin here reply, that the Commandments of God are set before men to render them inexcusable; we rejoin, that this also is positively vain. For if any father should command his son to eat up a mountain and the son did it not; that son would be no more inexcusable, after such commandment of his father, than he was before. Just in the same manner; if God should command me not to steal; and yet I must steal, of necessity imposed on me by him; and if I can no more abstain from stealing, on

account of that necessity, than I can eat up a mountain, I am no more inexcusable after such a commandment than I was before; nor am I more excusable before such commandment than I was after.—In a word, the opponents of Calvin argue, that if this his doctrine be really true; a man is inexcusable even before the commandment of God is set before him. From which it will follow, that all commandment, given with the intent to produce this inexcusableness in man, is altogether needless and vain.

Moreover if the wicked is reprobated of God, before he becomes wicked; that is, before he is born, even from all eternity; and if, therefore, he sins of necessity, he is already inexcusable and condemned, even before any precept is given to him. And he *is* so condemned, before he has done any evil act at all. Whereas, all laws, human and divine, condemn a man, *after* the act, and *for* the act.

REPLY

OF JOHN CALVIN TO

ARTICLE XIII.

[THAT IS, CALUMNY XIII.!]

AND TO CALUMNIATOR'S OBSERVATIONS, ETC., THEREON.

WHAT you really mean or propose to yourself in this THIRTEENTH ARTICLE (*that is*, CALUMNY), I cannot possibly catch or comprehend. You seem to me like one endeavouring to spell-bind the senses of men by a buz of magic whispers. For what are *accidental sins?* Who, beside yourself, ever fabricated such unheard of creatures as these, in the workshop of the human brain? I have elsewhere in my writings, and ever taught that all those

things which seem to happen accidentally, are ruled and overruled by the SECRET PROVIDENCE of God.—Who was it that gave you the license to gather from thence the idea of an *accidental* sin? And was this doctrine which I have taught my own and of my own creation?—No! It has God himself for its author. If, when a man is cutting the boughs of a tree, the axe slips from his hand, and falls upon the head of one passing by, is this, think you, an *accident?* Not so thought the servant of God, Moses. The Holy Spirit declares by him, that the man thus stricken was killed of God. And will you dare to say that God hurls his weapons and deals his blows, on this side and on that, as a man would do, who was intoxicated or insane? Indeed, if as you imagine, men sin without the purpose, understanding, or mind of God, how shall God be Judge of the world? And if the things which are done in the world, are done without God's purpose, understanding, mind, and will, in what does God exceed mortal man? In what is the adorable God higher and greater than man?

Hence when I affirm that God knows, and has his mind concerned in, every sin of man; are you driven thereby into such madness and hatred of the doctrine, as to denounce me the maker of a false God? Now suppose I were to concede to you that men sinned without God's knowledge, and without his mind being at all concerned therein;—What God would be left in heaven or in earth at all, by such a concession? And yet you imagine and boast yourself to be a great popular teacher. Whereas by thus depriving God of a concerned mind in all things which men do, whether sins or not, and merely dignifying him with the title of God, as Lucretius did his dreams, you make the adorable God nothing more than a lifeless unconcerned idol.

As to your arguments, that if men sin of necessity, all doctrine is superfluous, all precepts useless, all admoni-

tions vain, and all rebukes and threats absurd ;—if Augustine's book to Valentinus, "concerning compulsion and grace," suffices not to wash these frivolous objections out of your brain (to the discussion of which subject, Augustine was especially appointed of God), you are not worth the hearing of one word farther from me, on the sacred matter. Moreover I have so beaten off Pighius and your favourite master, Servetus, from their hold of this calumny, that teachable and candid readers require not another word of defence from me, on this point of my testimony.—I will only offer this one brief word to your boasting CALUMNIES directed against me, on the momentous doctrine of truth, now in question.—If you will not permit God to command anything which is beyond the natural comprehension of men ; when God shall bring you to stand before his tribunal, He will make you to see, with awful plainness, that which He hath declared, and not in vain, by the mouth of his apostle ;—that he hath accomplished, by his grace, that which was impossible by the Law (Rom. viii. 3). It is plain and certain, that in the Law is set forth that perfect righteousness which God required, in order that it might be ready at hand and plainly presented before the eyes of all men ; if men had but strength to do what God commands. But the apostle openly declares, that to attain unto the righteousness commanded in the Law is, on our part, impossible. What ground have you then for contending with, and reviling Calvin, respecting his doctrine on this divine point ?

If you steal of necessity (according to your own argument), think you not that you are less excusable, after the Law has been given, than you were before it was given ? —How widely different is the apostle Paul's opinion of himself, where he confesses, that he was "sold under sin ?" but where, at the same time, he freely and loudly testifies, that the Law "worketh wrath ?" showing thereby,

that it is in vain to stretch forth, in our defence, the shield of necessity, when every man's own conscience condemns him of voluntary and wilful wickedness.

Now I would just ask you this question;—When, a year ago, you had your own hook in your hand, by which you might have pulled down firewood to warm your own house; was it not your *own will* that drove you to steal wood from your neighbour? If then this one act suffices for your own righteous condemnation;—that you willingly made a base and wicked gain, to your neighbour's loss, what noise soever you may make about necessity, *necessity* did not acquit you on *that* occasion. And as to your farther noisy argument,—that no one can be justly condemned, excepting on account of his crime, and *after* his crime;—Concerning the former there exists no strife nor cause of strife, (or ought not to exist,) between me and you. Because I everywhere teach, that no one perishes but by the just judgment of God. But I cannot withhold my testimony, that there lies concealed under your words a great depth of poison. For if your statement of the divine matter, and your figure of speech, are to be received, God will appear unjust, who righteously includes the whole race of Abraham under the guilt of original sin.

You deny that it is lawful and right in God to condemn any one of mortals, unless it be *on account of* sin committed. Now numberless mortals are taken out of life, while yet perfect infants. You had better then commence your virulent war with God himself, who casts innocent babes, just taken from the wombs of their mothers, under the guilt of original sin, and subjects them to his wrath, and the desert of eternal death. Who, I pray you, must not detest the blasphemy of thus contending against God, when it is exposed to view, either by the voice or by pen of truth? Curse *me*, as long as you will; but blaspheme not the adorable God! For, as to myself, I can never expect to be free or exempt from the reproaches of those, who spare not the ever-blessed God himself.

With respect to the second member of your argument, that no one can justly be condemned until *after* his crime; —Just weigh, in your own balance, the lightness and emptiness of your loquacity herein. Why; your own masters, Pighius, Servetus, and all like barking unclean dogs, will at least confess, that all those whom God foreknew to be worthy of eternal destruction, were condemned by Him *before* the foundation of the world. Whereas you will not grant unto God the right to condemn any to eternal death, but those who have first been brought before earthly judges for their actually perpetrated crimes. From such arguments as these, readers may at once gather the marvellous extent of your insanity; who hesitate not to root out, in absolute sport, or jest, all the solemn order of the DIVINE JUSTICE!

CALUMNIATOR'S

DESCRIPTION OF THE FALSE GOD.

THE *false god* is slow to mercy, and swift to anger; who has created the greatest part of the world to perdition: and has predestinated them not only to damnation, but also to the *cause* of their damnation: and has therefore decreed, from all eternity, and wills and causes, their sins; which sins are, consequently, of necessity. So that neither thefts, nor adulteries, nor murders, are committed, but by his will and instigation. For he suggests in men depraved and evil affections; not only permissively, but effectively, and hardens men's hearts. Wherefore, while men are living wickedly, they are rather doing the work of God, than their own work: and cannot do otherwise.—This god *makes* Satan a liar; so that, *Satan* is not the cause of his own lies, but Calvin's god is.

CALUMNIATOR'S

DESCRIPTION OF THE TRUE GOD.

But that god which nature, reason, and the Holy Scriptures teach, is plainly the contrary to this god of Calvin. For *he* is inclined to mercy, and slow to anger. And *he* created the first man from whom all men arose, in his own image; that He might place him in paradise, and bestow upon him eternal life. This God wills that all men should be saved, and that no one man should perish. And for this very end, He sent his Son into the world; that his righteousness might abound wherever the sin of man had abounded. The light of this righteousness 'lightens every man that cometh into the world,' and this Son of God, the Saviour of the world, calls aloud to all, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—This God suggests good affections and honourable, and delivers men from the necessity of sinning (into which they precipitate themselves by their disobedience); and He heals all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease, among the people. Nay, so merciful is He, that He never denies his mercy and help unto anyone that prays to Him for them. In fact, this true god comes for the very end that he might destroy the works of that god of Calvin, and thrust him out of doors.

Now these two gods, as they are by nature contrary to each other; so do they beget children the direct contraries to each other. The children of that false merciless god are ever proud, unmerciful, envious, blood-thirsty, calumnious, feigned, carrying one thing in their countenance, and another in their heart; impatient, rash, malicious, seditious, contentious, ambitious, avaricious, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God: in a word, filled with depraved and evil affections with which their

god himself hath inspired them.—But the other true God begets men merciful, modest, gentle, benevolent, beneficent, abhorring the shedding of blood, open, candid, speaking the truth out of the abundance of the heart; benignant, quiet, peaceful, detesting broils and strifes, despisers of honours, liberal, lovers of God more than lovers of pleasure: in a word, full of all pure and honest affections, with which they are inspired of their father.

These are the views and arguments which your adversaries entertain concerning your doctrine, Calvin. And they advise all men to judge of your doctrine by its fruits. They moreover affirm, that both you and your disciples bear abundant fruits of your god:—that they are, for the most part, contentious, thirsty after revenge, ever tenacious and mindful of an injury received, and filled with numberless other vices, which your god begets in them.

If anyone reply to these assertions of your adversaries, and allege, that these are not faults caused by your doctrine; your opponents rejoin, that your doctrine does evidently beget such men, and that such is the case, is manifest from the fact that many, after they have embraced and followed your doctrine, become such characters; who were, before, far from being persons of that evil description: while on the other hand those who have believed the doctrine of Christ, have always been rendered better men: but they affirm, that men ever become manifestly worse, by *your* doctrine. They also assert, that when you and your followers profess, that you hold a sound doctrine, you are not to be believed.

The truth is, that I myself once favoured your doctrine, and even defended it: though I really did not clearly understand it. For I thought so much of the weight of your authority, that I considered the mere entertaining one thought contrary to it, was quite a crime. But now, having heard the arguments of your opponents, I have nothing to say, in reply to their conclusions and proofs. Your disciples indeed do attempt a reply, in your

defence; and among those whom they can find to be favourers of your doctrine, they boldly boast of having the truth on their side. But when they come to deal with your opponents, they vacillate and run to your books for protection: but that which they there find, is too weak to support them. For your reasonings are so weak, and for the most part so unsound, that as soon as your book drops from their hands, your reasonings drop from their memories: and therefore, they fail to convince your adversaries. On the other hand, the arguments of your opponents are manifest, powerful, and easily committed to memory; and are therefore at once understood by the illiterate (of which description, were most of those who followed Christ). Whence it results, that the generality of your disciples depend more upon *your* authority, than upon sound reason. And finding that they cannot vanquish their adversaries by argument, they hold them as heretics and bigots; shun their society, and warn all, on every side, to do the same.—On the contrary, I who am always of opinion that *what is said*, not the *person who speaks*, ought to be the subject of consideration, judge, that *all men* ought to be heard, and all *things that are said*, duly proved: and that what is good ought to be received and retained.

Wherefore, Calvin, if you have any arguments to produce which are true, plain, and sound; and by which your adversaries can be refuted, bring them forth, I pray you, before us all; and thus prove yourself, in reality, a defender of the truth.—You know what is written, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries shall be able to gainsay or resist." (Luke xxi. 15.) As to myself, wheresoever I can find the truth, I am prepared to follow it, and to exhort others to adopt the same course. If you have, perchance, erred (for we are all men), I entreat you, Calvin, give glory to God by a full confession. Your so doing will be more noble, and will bring you more fame, than the persevering in error. But be not,

I pray you, angry with me, on account of this my letter. If you are just and true, you have nothing to fear from it. First, because it is to your own advantage to be admonished by its arguments. And secondly, as you believe, as you say, that all things are done, *of necessity*, you must believe that this letter also was written by me, *of necessity*.—Farewell!

REPLY

OF JOHN CALVIN TO

ARTICLES XIII. AND XIV.

[THAT IS, CALUMNIES XIII. AND XIV.!]

AND TO CALUMNIATOR'S OBSERVATIONS, ETC., THEREON.

IT now only remains, that I vindicate the glory of the True and Eternal God from your profane maledictions and blasphemies.

You boastingly assert that I place before men the devil, in the place of the True God.—My defence needs only to be brief and comprehensive. Because all my writings openly testify, that I never had before me any other end, or purpose, or prayer, than that the whole world should dedicate itself to God, with all fear, reverence, and holiness: and that all men should cultivate equity, with a good conscience, among and towards each other; and also that *my own* life might not be inconsistent with my doctrine.—I will not so disregard and dishonour the grace of God as to compare myself with you or your fellows; whose professed blamelessness of life consists in a mere fawning external appearance. I will only observe, that if any unprejudiced and upright arbitrator should sit

to judge between us, he would at once acknowledge, that holy reverence of God was conspicuous both in my speech and in the actions of my life; and he would with equal readiness confess, that whatsoever proceeded from you, breathed fear and dread; which all the godly despise and laugh at.

But that I may examine, as briefly as possible, your base calumnies,—Who, or what, can be more profane, than yourself, when you contend, that God proves himself to be slow to mercy and quick to anger, in predestinating the greater part of the world to eternal death?—One thing is certain; that what kind of God soever you might fabricate or imagine for yourself; that One adorable God is to be worshipped and *is* worshipped by all the godly, who, for more than 2,000 years, left the whole human race, except the one family of Abraham, to wander in total darkness, to the destruction of their souls. Now if you are prepared to charge God with cruelty, because He condescended to bless one family of the earth only with the light of life, while He willed, that numberless nations should still lie, for the same 2,000 years, sunk in the darkness of their souls' death;—one question will furnish a solemn reply to every inquiry into the deep mystery!—How was it, that whole nations were not utterly destroyed, daily, until no more peoples existed? How was it, that the whole world was not destroyed, if such a thing were possible, a hundred times a-year? How was it that, during those same 2,000 years, so many glorious proofs of God's patience and mercy towards men, were manifested?—Even Paul the apostle himself, after having asserted that the "vessels of wrath" were "fitted to destruction" by God's secret and eternal decree, forgets not, nor hesitates to praise his patience and long-suffering, therein. If then the testimony of the apostle does not content you; I think that such an humble one as I may unconcernedly despise all your growlings at my doctrine.

God however needs not my feeble defence. He is now,

and in the last day will be, a mighty AVENGER of his own righteousness: even though all the foul tongues of the whole world should combine their efforts to becloud that righteousness with obscurity and confusion. Wherefore, go *you* on, with your band of like spirits, to hurl your blasphemies up to the very heavens. They shall all assuredly fall back on your own heads.—As to your base revilings, I can bear them, with patience and without trouble, provided they touch not the ever-blessed God; whose servant I am. I challenge you to stand (where you must one day stand) before his tribunal; that He may show himself, as He one day will show himself, the righteous Avenger of his own doctrine; which doctrine you thus furiously assail, in my feeble person.

As to your description of the nature of the true God; how appropriately you argue concerning the Divine Being let readers judge, from the absurd fact, that you make the beginning of all true knowledge of Him to proceed from *common sense*.—That there *is* a God, is a truth received by the one consent of all nations and all ages; because the seed and principle of this knowledge is imparted, by nature, in every human mind. But *what* God is, how shall *reason* define? which, by its own power of sight, can do nothing but turn the truth into a lie, and adulterate whatever of light and understanding true religion and faith possess. The Holy Spirit commands us to become fools, if we would be the true learners of heavenly doctrine: because, the animal man himself, can neither receive nor taste anything of wisdom divine. On the direct contrary, you would have human reason, and common sense, to form a judgment of the Great and adorable God. And you would not only set up reason, which, by its blindness, ever extinguishes God's glory as a leader and a guide, but would exalt that blind reason above the Scripture itself. What marvel then, if you should unconcernedly permit all religions of all kinds to be confounded together? And that you should consider

the Turk, who is enveloped in the deliriums of Mahomet, and who adores as his deity, no one knows what, as much a worshipper of God, as he who calls upon the Father of Christ our Redeemer, instructed by the sure word and faith of the everlasting Gospel? Though, that you do not patronize infidels, seriously, is a fact proclaimed aloud by those sarcastic grins of yours, which show your teeth gnashing at every plainest and holiest article of our faith: while the excuses which you make for the superstitions of all nations, prove your malicious purpose to be, to root out of the earth every doctrine of that holy religion, which the Sacred Oracles of God reveal and teach.

On the other hand, out of that very human reason, which is the mother of all errors, you form that god of yours, who wills, without any election or predestination of his own, that all men should be saved.—Has then the word election, which occurs so frequently in the Scriptures, no meaning whatever? Is it altogether a vain and empty term? Have the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel, no meaning whatever, when they everywhere proclaim aloud, that all those who were chosen by the eternal counsel of God, before the foundation of the world, are called and illuminated unto salvation? Is, we repeat, the united and harmonious testimony of the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel, an utter vanity, when they pronounce, free from all ambiguity, that the source and cause of eternal life is the free love of God, by which He has loved and embraced, not all mankind, but those out of mankind, whom He pleased!

And what will you gain, after all, I pray you, by thus roaring against this truth, a hundred times over. You dazzle the sight of the ignorant and the inexperienced, by setting before their eyes as a shining cloud, your doctrine, that God will have all men to be saved. But if these words of the apostle are not in perfect harmony with that

election, whereby God predestinated his own children unto eternal life; let me ask you this question:—How is it that if God willed all men to be saved, He did not show unto all nations and all men *the way* of salvation? Universally and well known is that remarkable word of God, in the law, "Behold, I set before thee this day the way of life, and of death." (Jer. xxi. 8.) If therefore God willed to gather together, *unto salvation*, all men, without distinction, why did He not set before *all men*, in common, the *way* of life and of salvation? Whereas, the fact was, that He deemed one family or nation, only, worthy of this high privilege. Nor did He confer this great blessing upon that one family, for any other reason, than because He loved them, (if the testimony of Moses is to be believed;) and because He would '*choose* them *for a peculiar people*'!

You affirm, that Christ was sent down from heaven, in order that his righteousness might over-abound, wherever sin had abounded. Whereas, this one sentence of yours evidences that you have come forth, furnished by the devil, out of the very bowels of hell itself, with this spirit and doctrine, that it might conceal every possible religious lie under the show of godliness and truth; in order that you might hold up Christ himself, and his true religion, to derision. For if, wherever sin abounded, the righteousness of Christ was designed of God to super-abound,—the condition of Pilate was just as good, and as safe, as that of Peter or of Paul. But to say nothing of Pilate, Paul declares, that the righteousness of Christ, and the faith of the Gospel, can never be separated. And what Gospel, I pray you, was there in France, and in other distant Heathen nations, at the time when Christ was upon earth?—What! Was not God the same *before* the coming of his Son, as He was when his Son did come and as He now is, and ever will be? Why then was it, that He withheld the treasure of salvation

from the nations of the earth, except from the family "of Abraham," until the fulness of the time was come"! (Gal. iv. 4.)

Wherefore, swell yourself with rage to the utmost, and burst into derision, if you will, and must, at the apostle Paul himself: for he declares, that '*that* mystery was made known by the preaching of the Gospel, which was before hidden in God.' (Ephes. iii. 9.) And now that the voice of the Gospel hath sounded forth, the righteousness of Christ cometh unto none, save those who receive it by faith. And whence cometh this faith? If you reply "By hearing," your answer is true. But remember, that it cometh not by hearing; without the *especial revelation of the Holy Spirit!* Isaiah himself expresses aloud his wonder at the small number of those "to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed." (Isaiah liii. 1.) And Paul uses the very words of the Prophet Isaiah, when he confines the gift of faith to the elect alone. And will you *per*mit and *ad*mit no distinction to be made of God in the salvation of men? Christ does indeed say aloud, "Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden." But the same Redeemer of men elsewhere also exclaims, "No one *can* come unto me except my Father which hath sent me draw him." Nor is there any want of harmony, or oneness of truth, when the same Saviour, who invites all men unto Him without exception, by his external voice, yet declares, that "A man can receive nothing, except it were given him from above;" and 'that no one can come unto Him, but those to whom it is given of the Father.' (John xix. 11; vi. 65.)

There is also another Scripture which you bedaub and defile by your swine-like pollution: when you say, 'that the light of the righteousness of Christ, lighteneth every man that cometh into the world.' (John i. 9.) But had not John, I pray you, just before said 'that the light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not.' (Ver. 5)? By these words John signifieth, that

whatsoever of human reason or understanding was given to men, at the beginning, was all stifled and extinguished by sin; and that no other remedy now remains, than the enlightening of the blind eyes by the Spirit of Christ. It is indeed quite true, that Christ never refused his grace to any one that asked for it. But you forget all the while, that all true prayers and entreaties are dictated and directed by the Spirit of God: and you are equally ignorant, that faith, which is the fruit and consequence of free election, is the key that opens the ears of God, and unlocks the door of the kingdom of heaven. Now, as you are thus evidently ignorant of these first principles of the doctrines of Christ, (which, if you take away, you bring down the Gospel of Christ at once to a level with the dark heathen mysteries of Proserpine or of Bacchus;) it is really a marvel, that persons, ensnared by such enormous errors and delusions, should ever find their way at all into the company of Christian men.

As to your foul assertion, that my disciples are made of my God like unto myself, cruel, envious, proud, slanderers, carrying one thing on their tongue, and another in their heart; I will come forward and refute this, your impudent reviling; prepared to do so, not so much by words, as by facts. For as I have no inclination to revile, in return; let all your base calumnies, as far as I am concerned, remain dead and buried by my hands: except that I assume the permission, (as in sacred duty bound,) to make one solemn declaration, calling God to witness;—that during the time I fed you at my house, I never saw a man more proud, more perfidious, or more devoid of human kindness. And sure I am, that those who do not confess that you are an impostor, a fellow of impudent audacity, a religious buffoon, professedly set to brawl down all godliness;—those, I say, who do not confess these to be your real principles, have no right judgment of your character. For what particular act of mine you accuse me of cruelty, I am anxious to know.

I myself know not that act; unless it be with reference to the death of your great master, Servetus. But that I myself earnestly entreated that he might not be put to death, his judges themselves are witnesses, in the number of whom, at that time, two were his stanch favourers and defenders. But I have said quite enough about myself.

What are the real fruits produced by my doctrine, both in this city, and far and wide throughout many nations, I leave to the consideration and reflection of all men. Out of this very school, which you so atrociously attack, and unceasingly rend in pieces, God daily chooses to himself men of the highest principles, and of the sweetest odour of his Truth, to illustrate the doctrine of his Gospel, and to be the victims of malice and cruelty. All those who really grow and make any advancement, in the doctrine of the Gospel (of the number of whom, neither the world nor the Church needs repent nor be ashamed), live a life, supported by the slenderest means; with difficulty, indeed, but with the greatest patience, and with the greatest kindness towards all men: or else, bidding a spontaneous farewell to luxury of every kind, they give themselves up to frugality, peacefully and freely; they all, as one man, resigning the world and self-enjoyment, aspire to the hope of a blessed immortality. Being averse to glorying in myself, or boasting of myself, I have called to witness these bright examples of his grace; which God thus sets before the world, to prove the truth of, and to defend, that doctrine which you vainly endeavour to rend in sunder by your foul revilings.

But do pray tell me what you were, at the time that you favoured this my doctrine. What was your state of mind at that time? You affirm that you could never clearly understand it, because the weight of my authority stood in your way; inducing you to consider it a perfect crime, to entertain any judgment whatever, in the least contrary to mine. Why, this is a marvellous matter. You must have been a brainless fellow indeed, if you

could not comprehend, after so many years' trial, that which I had taught you, in the most familiar manner, in my own house, and had so often expounded, in your hearing, in the public congregation. There are, however, many credible witnesses, that although I laboured long, but in vain, to correct and heal, by every possible means, the depravity of your nature, yet, that during the time you did profess to be one of my followers, you were restrained, by a somewhat effectual bridle, from your evil ways. So that the real cause of your alienation from me, evidently appears to be, a longing desire to throw off the rein, that you might break forth, with unbridled license, into this your present impious course; which is your true delight and boast.

You affirm that it is a principle with you to regard, not *who* it is that speaks, but *what* is spoken. I wish this had been a real principle with you long ago: so that you might have profited by the labours of others, and thus accustomed yourself to a teachable spirit. Whereas now, since audacity and loquacity are your only powers, all the favour you can procure to yourself from the evil-minded, is gotten from your base despising of others.—I would arrogate nothing to myself. But I really seem to myself to have so far deserved well of the Church, that if a place among the faithful servants of God be given to me by her, no man has a right to labour to bring my authority into contempt.—Had you asserted that a few *unlearned men* looked to my nod, or hung upon my judgment, or were influenced by my fame and authority; you might have had some colour of covering for your calumny. But now, since you magnify it into a notorious disgrace to me, that my doctrine does not satisfy or please illiterate men; who, think you, will believe you, if you assert, that learned and talented men alone have a taste for my books, and that *they* derive their wisdom from them? Nay, that they are so over awed by my authority, as not to attempt any judgment of their own?—If things be so, we

shall prove, upon your own authority that nothing can be judged to be true or right, but that which seems, to the ignorant multitude, to be plausible.

Yes! You would drive away all men from the liberal and useful arts and sciences; and would boast among your fellows, that all study and learning are useless and all the time spent, in vain, which is devoted to philosophy, to grammar, to logic, and even to divinity itself. You would thus cry down, I say, all useful learning, for this very reason;—that you might procure to yourself ignorant disciples, and make yourself great among them. And you say they that followed Christ were such. Just as if the Christian faith were a matter standing contrary to, and inconsistent with, learning!—But let Christian readers here mark the difference which exists between you and me:—I ever affirm, that the wisest among men, until they become fools, and, bidding farewell to all their own wisdom, give themselves up humbly and meekly to the obedience of Christ, are blinded by their own pride, and remain utterly unable to taste one drop of heavenly doctrine. For all human reason is tasteless, in the mysteries of God, and all human perspicacity, blind. I maintain therefore that the beginning and essence of all divine wisdom is humility. This strips us of all the wisdom of the flesh, and prepares us to enter upon the mysteries of God with reverence and faith.—You, on the contrary, bid ignorant and untaught men to come forth into public: men who, despising all learning, and inflated with pride alone, rashly attempt to pass their judgment on divine things. Nor will you acknowledge any to be legitimate judges, in divine matters, but those who, content with the opinion of reason and common sense, unceremoniously reject all which does not just suit their own mind and taste.

Respecting the other reproach with which you load my humble followers,—that of being heretics, the testimony of the apostle Paul quite satisfies them on that point: upon

whose authority they would rather turn away from such real heretics as yourself and your followers, than knowingly pollute their ears by listening to their blasphemies. —You maintain however that such is not your principle of action. You hold, that all men ought to be heard. Think you then that the apostle saith in vain, "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject." (Titus iii. 10.) Now if any one had denied to you the right of being heard, you would have had some cause for complaint. But when there was always granted you the liberty of prating as you liked, in the public assembly of the people; nay, when after having been called and almost dragged there, you have often sat down vanquished, and with nothing to say; what farther liberty of speech would you have, if the ears of the godly are ever open to you, until they are satiated and nauseated unto disgust, at your blasphemies against the adorable God!—As to yourself, you can find gratification and delight in holding up all the first great principles of godliness to derision. But would you *therefore* have all the children of God to be such fools, as to laugh at your audacious impudence, or to endure your profane reproaches, without a word or an emotion?

With regard to the sacred cause in question,—I feel confident that I have hereby given you a sufficient answer. So that all readers of a sound mind may easily perceive, that I am not altogether destitute of that blessed Spirit, who giveth a mouth and wisdom; which mouth and wisdom if you are still determined to resist, you can do nothing more thereby than sustain a disgrace and a confusion, corresponding with your obstinacy. Nevertheless, I will not cease to wish and to pray, that you may yet bow to the manifest Truth of God: though such a thing I scarcely dare to hope.

One final word, upon your remaining profane jeer;—that I have no ground for being angry at your reproaches, because, according to my own doctrine, they were written

of *necessity*.—But I am here furnished by the Scriptures with a solemn and effectual exhortation *to forbearance*. And nothing can be more instructive and appropriate, in this my case, nor better adapted to appease my indignation, than this admonition of David, "Let him curse, for God hath bidden him." (2 Sam. xvi. 11.) David knew that Shimei, on that occasion, was driven on by the same rage of cursing as that with which *you* boil now. But those curses which Shimei thought he was hurling at David, under the (to him) fortuitous occurrence of the then present circumstances, David knew, by reflection, to be directed by the overruling and SECRET PROVIDENCE of God; and therefore, he restrains himself, by the utterance of these memorable words. And indeed no man will ever bear the assaults of the devil and of wicked men, with a composure and moderation, but the man who can turn away his mind and thoughts from those assaults, to God alone who ordained them; and who can say, using the words of God himself,—"The Lord rebuke thee, Satan." (Zech. iii. 2.) Amen.

Geneva, January 5th, 1558.

CONCLUDING ADDRESS

AND

NOTICE.

Dear Brethren and Friends,

You have here presented to you, by your own *again* liberally supplied *means*, the "Second Part" of "Calvin's Calvinism": which completes the Two Volumes originally proposed, by the translator and his counselling friends, to be published *by subscription*. For this aid in bringing these two monuments of the eminent Swiss Reformer's testimony to THE TRUTH before the English Church and nation, you are kindly requested to receive, from the translator and his friends, their sincere thanks.—May "The God of Truth" bless the Treatises to *your* eternal benefit, and to his own wide glory.

On the completion of this Second and last Volume, the attention of the Church of Christ and of the general public, is faithfully and affectionately called, to the following *information*.

Our Preface to this Second Volume, in its summary comparison of the immortal Luther, with the equally immortal Calvin, contains the following remarks;—

"Luther's mighty work lay in the exposure and demolition of the principles and authorities of Churches, and of kingdoms; and in a defiance of the power of popes, and kings, and princes, and the potentates of the earth. But the work of Calvin dealt more directly with the hearts,

principles, and spirits of men; full of hatred against those very truths, which he was expressly called of God to declare, almost anew, with all the light and penetrating power of his ministry, to a truth-hating world.

"Both these pre-eminent Servants of God, however, 'hidden in the hollow of his hand' (Is. xlix. 2), defended from without by his Omnipotent power, and sustained within, by the consolations of his Spirit, 'finished the work which He gave them to do' (2 Tim. iv. 7); and are now wearing, in eternal glory, the crowns 'which the Lord, the righteous Judge, had laid up for them,' from all eternity, as their sure reward. (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.)"

Not, however, that the sphere of Luther's mighty ministry, was bounded by his defence of the truth against the great and the powerful. By no means; as numberless broken-hearted sinners have testified, during the last three centuries; being comforted, blessed, and saved, by various remaining portions of his ministerial testimony.—No! the great and beloved German Reformer was as rich a pastor, as a terrible warrior. He fed the sheep of Christ in the fattest pastures (Ezek. xxxiv. 14), while he destroyed the wolves, with a sure destruction, on every side. Nor were his pastoral qualifications and resources confined to the fold of his own day and field. Through the provident mercy of the Great Shepherd, Luther has left, in his precious remains, pastures for the sheep of the universal Church, in all ages and places. Nor will those pastures be either dried up, or lost, until time, nations, and the Churches of God in their midst, shall cease to exist.

The present translator has already enjoyed the delightful labour of supplying the English Church of Christ with many fields of pleasurable and profitable pasture, from the noble Reformer's works: in which numbers of the sheep of the fold have sweetly fed, and lain down (Ezek. xxxiv. 15), during the last thirty years; and in which they still are feeding and lying down, here and there, where they are "scattered, in this dark and cloudy day," without fields,

folds, or shepherds.* (Ezek. xxxiv. 12.) And if his paralyzed and precarious life be spared, for the holy purpose, the same translator hopes to supply the sheep of the same fold, with many rich meadows more, from the same inexhaustible sources of the same great Servant of God. He has now an extensive production of the beloved and divinely and astonishingly gifted Luther, in hand, which will constitute by far the richest of all the fields, into which he has hitherto invited the sheep of Christ to enter, and feed; and in which they will find, not only "fat" pasturage (Ezek. xlv. 15), but a "good fold" (Ezek. xxxiv. 14), and a "green bed" (Song i. 16), indeed.

This magnificent work will be found to embrace, not only all the essential doctrines of the Gospel of Christ; but the whole "path of the just" (Prov. iv. 18) in every station and relationship of life; from the king upon the throne, to the maid-servant that is behind the mill (Exod. xi. 5), and to the beggar upon the dunghill (1 Sam. ii. 8); setting forth, with rich and edifying instruction, the trials, the faith, the prayers, and the deliverances, of God's people, personal, domestic, ministerial, congregational, national,—and in every possible form of the Christian life and pilgrimage. So that, he who shall have furnished himself with Luther's imperishable "Commentary on the Galatians," which sets forth the great fundamental doctrine of *justification by faith;* and shall have added to it Luther's admirable production now in hand (should the translator's powers be spared him so long as to complete it, and should the Almighty be pleased to open a door for its publication), will possess a richly stored treasury, or condensed *body*, of doctrinal, experimental, and saving *divinity*.

* For an account of these Translations of various remnants of the great and noble Luther's Works, see first page of *Advertisements*, at the end of the present volume.

An English version of this colossal effort of the beloved and admirable Luther's consecrated mind, is designed, by his revering translator, not only for the personal edification of the saints, but for the worship of the family altar, and even for that of the public congregation, in this day of darkness, dearth, and death; when the Word of the Lord is so "precious" (1 Sam. iii. 1); when "the poor and the needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst" (Isa. xli. 7); and when a man may wander from sea to sea, and from the north even unto the east; and may run to and fro, and seek, and find, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water (blessed be the adorable God, whose *temporal* "mercies are over *all* his works"!) but of "hearing the Word of the Lord" (Psalm cxlv. 9; and Amos viii. 11).—In such a day as this, many a "little sanctuary," or worshipping knot, of God's people (Ezek. xi. 16), may find the loved and deeply-experienced Luther, calculated, though dead, still to speak to their souls, through this his grand Testimony, more profitably, than many, or perhaps any, ministers *they* may be able to procure, in this dreary and dearthy last half of the nineteenth century.—The whole work, therefore, will be divided into portions, or short sermons, for these various and important ends.*

The great work thus alluded to is no other, and no less a production of grace and of power, than MARTIN LUTHER'S majestic "COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF GENESIS"!—a Commentary unsurpassed and unequalled—for truth, depth, and worship—by any exposition of the

* Had this originally designed arrangement been carried out, the number of such Sermons, or Lectures, or portions, would have been from 1,500 to 2,000. But it was ultimately deemed preferable to let the Commentary remain, as *a whole;* and to leave each head of a family, or 'help' (1 Cor. xii. 28) or 'teacher' (Eph. iv. 11), of "a little sanctuary," to make the selection of the Sermon, or portion, according to his own judgment, as circumstances should direct or require.

Holy Scripture by any expositor, either before or since Luther himself. It is the *last*, and therefore (as might naturally be concluded) the *greatest* Work of the great Reformer; the most matured, the most important, and the most precious Testimony of his lips, or of his pen. It is the concentrated essence of his personal and ministerial experience; extending over an eventful period of both, exceeding *forty years*, and condensed into the last *ten years* of his invaluable life; the whole of which ten years he solemnly devoted to this memorable Commentary; which, according to his own deep confession, was the favourite offspring, the greatest delight, and the peculiar glory, of his own soul.

These statements and observations are all verified from the lips of the revered Reformer himself, and from the pen of one of his faithful friends. At the very commencement of this stupendous Work, Luther uttered, with devoted determination, and with prophetic presentiment, these remarkable words. "*This Commentary I shall pore over* (immorabor), *and die over* (immoriar)." And after a TEN YEARS' Herculean labour of body, exercise of mind, and devotedness of soul, in the preparation and delivery of Lectures on this Holy Book, he ended his last Lecture, with these equally remarkable words; so truly verifying that predictive presentiment which he had uttered, at the commencement of this last and greatest of his labours. "*Thus have I finished the* dear [!] *book of Genesis. May our Lord God grant, that others may do it better than I have done. I can no more: I am so weak. Pray to God for me that He may grant me a good, holy, happy, last hour.*" Besoldus, that one of his four faithful friends, who took upon himself to collect and arrange for the press, the FOURTH VOLUME of the Commentary, "The History of the Patriarch Joseph," pens, at the foot of the whole Commentary, the following record: "*That man of God, Doctor Martin Luther, finished his Commentary on Genesis, in the year of our*

Lord 1545*: having commenced it, on the* 17*th day of November, in the year of our Lord* 1535. *In his opening Lecture he had said, 'Over my Commentary on this book I shall pore* (immorabor)*; and over it I shall die* (immoriar)*.' And according to this prophecy concerning himself, he died at Isleben, in his own country, on the* 18*th day of the month of February, in the year of our Lord* 1546."

The following is a *synopsis* of the subject-matter of this noble Work: by an inspection of which, any one hitherto unacquainted with it, (and few there are who know its existence, for, like the present Treatises of Calvin, it has lain unknown to the English Church of Christ for above 300 years) will be furnished with a summary view of its CONTENTS, and also of the *form* in which they were intended to appear, in the translation thus commenced.

Vol. I. THE CREATION.—THE FLOOD . 750 *pages.*
Vol. II. THE HISTORY OF ABRAHAM . 1,000 *pages.*
Vol. III. THE HISTORY OF ISAAC AND OF JACOB . . . . . 1,000 *pages.*
Vol. IV. THE HISTORY OF JOSEPH . . . 1,000 *pages.**
(8*vo., as the present vol., printed with greater fulness.*)

* It may perhaps interest those readers and lovers of Luther, who do not yet possess that knowledge, to inform them, that this great COMMENTARY (like all his other Commentaries) was given to the world by its noble Author, in a series of Sermons, or Lectures, delivered (generally *twice* a-day (!)) in the Divinity School of Wittemberg; and taken down, at the time, by his faithful, noble-minded, and God-fearing friends, Caspar Cruciger and George Rorary; assisted by Vitus Theodore, and one or two others. These good and laborious men, (furnished perhaps with the aid of Luther's own notes, &c.,) collected the whole Commentary; formed it into these FOUR FOLIO VOLUMES, superintended them through the press, and published them, accompanied with gracious and appropriate Prefaces, to the Church and to the world.

Vitus Theodore superintended the WHOLE WORK, wrote its general Preface, and collected and edited the FIRST VOLUME.

This majestic and priceless work has never left its hold of deep interest on the mind of the present translator, for more than 30 years. About thirty years ago, he commenced the labour of its translation: which undertaking however his translation of the four volumes of "Select Works of Martin Luther," and of other productions of the great Reformer,* and the pressure, at the same time, of his scholastic and ministerial labours, compelled him to discontinue. Two years and a-half ago, however, the greatest of all domestic

The same holy and faithful friend of Luther collected and edited the SECOND VOLUME; prefixing to it a lucid, beautiful, and gracious Preface written by Michael Roting.

Jerome Besoldus of Norberg "diligently and faithfully" collected, from the treasured resources of Cruciger, Rorary, and others, and edited, the THIRD VOLUME; introducing it by a masterly, descriptive, and edifying Preface, from the pen of Melancthon.

Besoldus also edited the FOURTH VOLUME; prefacing it by an appropriate Introduction, written by himself.

Luther acknowledges these invaluable labours of his invaluable friends, and perpetuates the memory both of their immense labour and of their holy friendship, in the following terms, in his *own* simple but sublime PREFACE to the WHOLE WORK:—"*These my Lectures have happily fallen into the hands of two Collectors, good and godly men; Doctor Caspar Cruciger, whose own works bear satisfactory witness to his abounding in the Spirit, and of his devotedness to God; and M. George Rorary, a presbyter of our own Church: the example of whose great labours, herein, Vitus Theodore, the preacher of the Norberg Church, following, has freely added his own services. All these, being faithful and devoted ministers of the Word of God, have judged it altogether desirable, that these my Lectures should be published. I allow them, therefore, to follow (as the apostle saith) the 'full persuasion of their own mind:' because I see that they are moved by a holy desire to help the Churches of God: and therefore I heartily approve their wishes in this matter; and I as heartily pray for an abundant blessing of God upon them.*"

* For a description of these publications, see, as before, the first page of *the advertisements*, at the end of the volume.

afflictions, attended with *paralysis* in himself, forced him to relinquish both his school and his ministry. After a little recovery from these severe visitations, and sometimes even in the midst of them, his fond hope of yet translating his beloved and revered "Luther on Genesis," revived. Before he resumed Luther, however, his mind was led to give to the Church, and to the world, the two thus completed Volumes of "Calvin's Calvinism." Having, through Divine mercy, and by the supplied *means* recorded at the opening of this volume, completed Calvin's two powerful testimonies; the translator finally returned to his original design of thirty-three' years standing,—a translation of Luther's "Commentary on the Book of Genesis." But,

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

"How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out." (Rom. xi. 30.) Yet, in his judgments, equally as in his mercies, "He is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." (Is. xxviii. 29.)—In the midst of this his final attempt, the translator is mysteriously, but righteously and wisely, overtaken by the visitation of a concussion of the brain, in a perilous rail-road collision. And though he is, through great mercy, recovering from its most dangerous features; he feels that his powers are too seriously injured, and too far gone, to leave him the least hope whatever of completing even *one quarter* of his original and whole design. He has however nearly completed The Creation (which will form a *first part* of Vol. I.; and will consist of about 400 pages.) He has also, in hand, The Flood (which will form the *second part* of Vol. I.; and will make about 350 pages.) These *two parts* will complete, (if his life and powers be spared to complete them) the First Volume. The Creation will appear, as soon as it shall please God to set ' before it

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ERRATUM.

Page 143, lines 3 and 4, omit the words "in his own *way* and by his own *means*."

great and bright servant of God, in Divine things. And he will at least have pointed out to some succeeding competent translator, a work of years to accomplish, for the glory of God, and the edification of his people. Such a successor, however, to be successful, must not only possess classical and lingual competency. He must be one of the "children" of the Redeemer, "taught of the Lord." (Isa. liv. 13.) With the endowment of a somewhat wide and elevated mind, he must be a partaker of the faith, and spirit, and love, and religion, and worship, of his Great Commentator. No one, without the possession of these qualifications, in an adequate degree, can do the work of a

* The present translator cannot propose to publish these works *by subscription*. For though he is gratified with, and thankful for, the free and noble manner in which the Two Volumes of Calvin's testimony have thus been encouraged, supported, and carried through the press; yet the *correspondence*, and the *adjustment of accounts*, connected with such a mode of publication, are so complex and vast that they are too much for his powers again to attempt. Perhaps it might be as as well to state as a matter of *information* that the cost of printing, binding, and publishing the CREATION would be about 120*l.*; and the corresponding cost of the "Flood" about 90*l.*

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Should the present translator not be so favoured and honoured of God as to live to see "The Creation" and "The Flood" launched into the bosom of the English Church; the publication even of one of them will leave him the satisfaction, that he has afforded the British disciples of Christ a moment's insight into the greatness of this last work, and these "last words" of Luther (2 Sam. xxiii. 1); and that he has given them a brief taste of the depth and richness of the knowledge of that great and bright servant of God, in Divine things. And he will at least have pointed out to some succeeding competent translator, a work of years to accomplish, for the glory of God, and the edification of his people. Such a successor, however, to be successful, must not only possess classical and lingual competency. He must be one of the "children" of the Redeemer, "taught of the Lord." (Isa. liv. 13.) With the endowment of a somewhat wide and elevated mind, he must be a partaker of the faith, and spirit, and love, and religion, and worship, of his Great Commentator. No one, without the possession of these qualifications, in an adequate degree, can do the work of a

* The present translator cannot propose to publish these works *by subscription*. For though he is gratified with, and thankful for, the free and noble manner in which the Two Volumes of Calvin's testimony have thus been encouraged, supported, and carried through the press; yet the *correspondence*, and the *adjustment of accounts*, connected with such a mode of publication, are so complex and vast that they are too much for his powers again to attempt. Perhaps it might be as as well to state as a matter of *information* that the cost of printing, binding, and publishing the CREATION would be about 120*l*.; and the corresponding cost of the "Flood" about 90*l*.

translator of Luther. He can never convey the mind, nor transfuse the spirit, of his Author. He can never do justice to Luther, nor bring glory to God, nor profit his people. He can rise no higher, and can go no farther, in his usefulness, than the line drawn round the number of all such unqualified doers of his work, by the Great Teacher himself. "They shall not profit *this* people (God's people) at all." —Nor can a labour of such magnitude and weight, be sustained, even by a duly qualified translator, without corresponding *encouragement* from the Church of Christ: unless he have ample *time*, and ample *means*, at his command. The fewness of the present translator's remaining days, and the circumscribed nature of his pecuniary abilities, deprive *him* of both these indispensables.*

* Should the "CREATION" ever appear in the translator's lifetime, *his* Preface to it will contain many very singular instances of similitude and coincidence between the *close* of his beloved and revered Luther's life, and his own; as to *circumstances* of *health*, *purpose*, *desire*, &c. To these he shall forbear to allude, here. He will only observe, that had his life and powers been spared to execute his translation of this gigantic work, unparalleled for magnificence and worth, its labour would have occupied him about *ten years*, at *two or three* hours per day; thus translating, about *two* of the great and beloved Luther's *lectures*, each day; as many as he delivered each day, and, probably, in about the same *time*, which he occupied in their delivery.

Moreover, as this great Commentary was the *last*, of the noble Luther's works; so, its translation, (or rather a small part of it,) will most probably be the last of its humble, but *revering*, translator's mental and bodily efforts: for, (as he has already observed,) he has but the slightest ground of hope, that he shall ever give the Church of Christ more than the FIRST VOLUME of this master-piece of the greatest of extra-Bible saints and servants of the Most High. Hence, the predictive and precious words of the great Original, really breathe the purpose, and the prophetic presentiment of his humble translator. "Over this Commentary I shall pore (*immorabor*), and over it I shall die (*immoriar*)."

Nor are the words of the *concluding* great Commentator's *concluding*

The utmost consideration *of price* will be exercised in the publication of the above translations (should they ever be published). For it is a matter of earnest desire with the translator, (as far as his influence and control shall be able to reach) to bring the purchase and possession of this last and greatest work of the great Luther, within the means of "the poor of this world rich in faith," who form, for the most part, the members of Christ's Church on earth, and are the heirs of his kingdom. (James ii. 5.)

This is a matter, however, which requires the greatest caution, consideration, and judgment. Two things are to be duly provided for;—*facility of purchase* for God's poor, and *the preservation* of his great servant's greatest effort, as a work of *standard divinity*, in the English language, in the midst of the Church and nation. To bring out this magnificent Commentary, therefore, in 3*d.* or 6*d. numbers*, or pamphlets, and in corresponding paper and print, would be wholly injudicious, and utterly unworthy its greatness. It would be as improper as impracticable. It could not be done, with any *monetary* possibility, even if the immense labour of the translation were handed to a printer and publisher, *gratuitously*. And after all, the preservation of such an important work to future generarations, must, by such a system of publication, be imperilled, and surely frustrated.

Yes! This splendid production of its immortal Author, doubtless the master-piece of his memorable ministry and might, is A WORK, the worth and dignity

prayer less applicable, than they are precious, to his humble translator: for they are, and will be, he hopes, *his* last prayer; when he shall leave (as, in all human probability, he must do), his fond and devoted labour, *unfinished*.—"May our God grant that others may do it better than I have done.—(The qualifications indispensable for his successor, the present translator has already stated.)—I can no more: I am so weak. Pray God for me that I may have a holy, happy, last hour."

of which demand, at our hands, as much the honour and respect of its most careful preservation and perpetuity, as the facilitation of its cheap purchase and use. Had this honour and foresight not been exercised by the great Luther's wise, laborious, devoted, and provident friends; whose names and memory he immortalizes with his own, (as we have seen,) in his *own* PREFACE to this greatest of all Commentaries; it might have perished long ago, in the desolations and ashes of time. All possible considerateness for the poor of the flock, therefore, which can stand, in due *consistency*, with public reverence for, and public duty towards, the great and immortal Commentator, shall (D.V.) be thoroughly exercised.

The first volume of "Calvin's Calvinism," (the translator is grieved to say,) has not yet been received so widely by the Church of Christ, nor so heartily *encouraged*, as he ardently expected it would have been. He still trusts, however, that such will, eventually, be its success: nor is he without hope, that the completion and issue of this Second Volume will kindle a new and stronger interest for *both* Treatises. The present day of the professing Gospel Church is not one where Truth, in its life, and grace, and power, meets with a heart and soul reception and encouragement. It is a Sardian state; characterized by the name of life, in the midst of death. "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." (Rev. iii. 1.) All is "the form of godliness without the power." (2 Timothy iii. 5.) The inquiries concerning a gospel *minister* (so called) are, not, Is he a saved man? (2 Tim. i. 9.) Does he know the truth for himself? (John viii. 32.) Is he sent of God to preach? (Rom. x. 15,)—but, Is he a man of talent? Does he discover great abilities? Is he an eloquent speaker? Is he a popular preacher? —The anxieties concerning a gospel *book* are, Is it pleasingly and *judiciously* written?—(that is, so that the Gospel may give no "offence"!) (Gal. v. 11.)—Is it relieved by pleasing anecdotes? Does it interest by

striking incidents? Does it delight and astonish by the introduction of charming and splendid scenery? Is its author a popular writer?

Such is the gospel, and such are the gospel preachers,* the gospel hearers, and the gospel readers, of the present day. There is no room, now-a-days, for an independent, holy, truthful, powerful, piercing, and convincing Calvin. Nor is there a more gladdening hope, that the majestic, mighty, deep, surprising, surpassing, and edifying Luther, will be hailed with a welcome, as wide as his worth deserves.—No! We want, in God's great and righteous cause, in our time, a few wealthy and good Josephs

* Did you mark, dear Brethren and Friends, the vastness and the continuousness of the labours of this pre-eminent servant of the Most High, as stated in the *Note*, page 140, of this Address?—*Two* Lectures, of probably one or two hours long, *every day!* with all the inevitable amount of thought and research, in their preparation! For, of course, Lectures of such depth were not delivered off-hand, as our boasted extemporaneous *sermons* are. They were not offered to the Church, and to the world, and to posterity, without the most profound premeditation.

What an ox-like labour! or (as our great Luther himself expresses it in his "Creation," when commenting on Genesis iii. 19), what a *ministerial* "sweat"!—Compared with the "sweat" of this laborious "man of God" what are we of this age (the *good*, yea, the *best*, among us), whether as preachers of the Word, or writers of books!—mere easy-lived, leisure-houred, little-to-do *gentlemen!*

It is scarcely necessary for *us* to intimate, that we are not here speaking against, nor depreciating, *extemporaneous* preaching. It is the most desirable mode of ministering the Gospel, where God is pleased to bestow the required gifts. But the amount of preparatory waiting upon God, worship, meditation, and prayer, with which extemporaneous preachers enter the pulpit, is solemnly different. In the present case, however, our great and revered Commentator, came before an assembly of *divinity students*, to open to them, in his high office, as their *divinity Professor*, the glories of the holy Book of Genesis.—What a blessed 'College course' was that of Wittenberg, in the days of Luther, as a PREPARATION of young men for the MINISTRY of CHRIST, and for the 'PREACHING OF THE WORD!'

of Arimathea (Matt. xxvii. 57); to supply the poverty of God's poor (James ii. 5), and the covetousness of the world's rich (Ps. cxix. 36). In a word, we want a goodly number of men of like hearts, (but of larger means,) with the free and noble Subscribers to the present Volumes: men, who gave their gold and silver to the work and aided its issue into the light, *not for themselves* only, but for the Church of Christ at large. God is able to find such, for the present, or for any exigency of his Church, in any age or day; whenever He is pleased to diffuse the Word of his Truth, and to broaden the width of his glory; and at the same time, both to edify his chosen people, and to bear his own testimony to an ungodly and gain-saying world! May he be pleased so to work, in this our day.

Thus have you, dear Brethren and Friends, presented to your sight and thoughts, the greatness and the preciousness of MARTIN LUTHER'S "COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF GENESIS!" together with the state of its translation, and, the prospect of the means, requisite for its publication. The result is now left to the good pleasure of the God of Luther, and of his humble

TRANSLATOR.

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